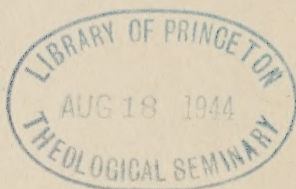


HISTORY OF THE  
Archdiocese of Boston

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VOLUME I

1604 - 1825

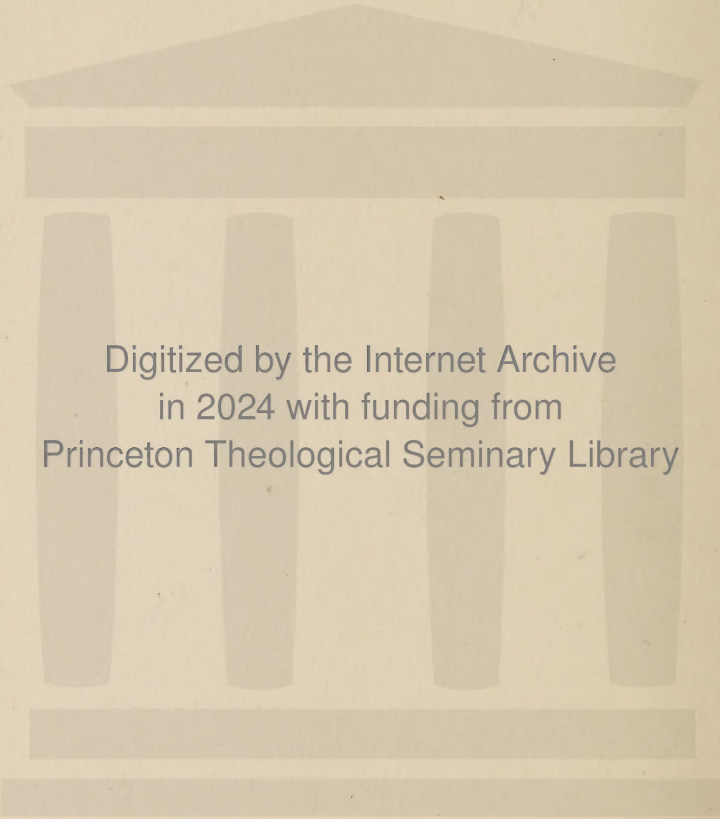


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HISTORY OF THE  
Archdiocese of Boston

1604 - 1943

IN THREE VOLUMES

• • •

VOLUME I









HIS EMINENCE, WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL



HISTORY OF THE  
**Archdiocese of Boston**

*In the Various Stages of Its Development*

1604 to 1943

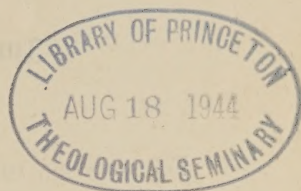
IN THREE VOLUMES

By

ROBERT H. LORD

JOHN E. SEXTON

EDWARD T. HARRINGTON



*With a Foreword by*

HIS EMINENCE

WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL

*Archbishop of Boston*

VOLUME I

*New York*

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*Archbishop of Boston*

February 29, 1944

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL

## NOTE

At a time when the printing of this work was already far advanced, this Diocese and the nation have been inexpressibly saddened by the brief illness and death, on April 22nd, of Cardinal O'Connell. We have preferred to put forth the text without changes. But it is for us a cause of deep sorrow that a work which was to have been published in commemoration of His Eminence's sixtieth anniversary in the priesthood, should now appear rather as a tribute to a great reign ended, and to a noble and valiant soul that is now, we trust, in the Presence of God.

THE AUTHORS

## FOREWORD

RELIGIOUS HISTORY is, of all forms of history, the most important, for it deals with the highest range of man's activities, his striving after God. Every scholar in investigating the history of any nation must, among the first of questions, ask himself how that nation satisfied the universal human craving for salvation from sin and for peace and union with God; how it found sustenance for the life of the spirit; how it utilized those wellsprings of moral strength, and hope, and inspiration to courageous and righteous living that men do unquestionably derive chiefly from religion. To the Catholic, moreover, the history of his Church has a sacred character. For to him that Church is no mere human institution, but the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the Mystical Body of Christ, the mysterious but no less real organism which Our Blessed Lord has created in order to continue in it the work that He began during His visible life in Palestine nineteen centuries ago. Of this Mystical Body He is the head; in it He still teaches and heals and is persecuted; the Church's victories and defeats are His victories and defeats; through her voice He speaks; and in her and through her and with her He will labor till the end of time. The history of the Church is, therefore, in a sense, the continuation of the Gospel record.

In all that long history since the Church first went forth at Pentecost from that upper room in Jerusalem, there are few more impressive developments than the immense growth of Catholicism in the United States in the last one hundred and sixty years. Seldom has the parable of the mustard seed been more strikingly illustrated than in the multiplication of the twenty-five thousand Catholics of 1783 into the twenty-three million Catholics of today. Just at the time when in Europe all the powers of this world have seemed leagued together against the Church, there has sprung up in this country a body of Catholics which in numbers is exceeded by only two or three of the old Catholic nations, and in faith, zeal, and generosity



is exceeded by none. The importance to the Church of this enormous increment in the young, rich, and virile Republic of the West increases from year to year, and may conceivably become of epoch-making significance. Nor, we venture to think, has this growth of Catholicity been less important to the Republic. In view of all the paganizing and destructive influences at work in society today, is it not of inestimable advantage that in so large a section of the American people faith in God, in the supernatural order, in integral Christianity, and in a divinely sanctioned moral code is maintained by a church whose unique power to move the minds and hearts and consciences of men, whose fruitfulness in all good works, and whose unfailing energy, vitality, and sheer indestructibility are acknowledged by all unprejudiced observers?

No portion of the Catholic Church in the United States has a history of more absorbing interest or one more worth thorough study than the Archdiocese of Boston. Few other sections of this land present such a long, varied, and dramatic record of Catholic activities; nowhere else has the Church encountered sterner prejudices or a fiercer opposition; nowhere else have patience, fortitude, and perseverance been more needed on the Catholic side. But nowhere else has there been a higher average of episcopal leadership (I am speaking of my predecessors in this See), or of loyalty, energy, and unity among the flock. And seldom, perhaps, have struggles, toils, and sacrifices for the Faith been rewarded with richer success. The outcome, indeed, is one of the ironies of American history. Massachusetts was founded to be a stronghold of ultra-Protestantism, of "the dissidence of dissent," and in order to "erect a bulwark against the Kingdom of Antichrist" (by which was meant the Church of Rome). Throughout the colonial period she forbade Catholic priests under the sternest penalties from setting foot on her soil, and did her utmost to keep out even Catholic laymen. Yet today two-thirds of the people of this Commonwealth who profess any religion are Catholics. Except for New Mexico and Rhode Island, Massachusetts is the most Catholic State in the Union. And the Archdiocese of Boston is,

in point of numbers, the third strongest diocese in this country, and one of the most thriving centres of Catholic activity in the world.

Such striking achievements crown well over three hundred years of Catholic efforts to plant the Faith in New England (and all New England, it will be remembered, was originally included in the Diocese of Boston). Two very distinct attempts have been made toward that end. The first attempt was carried on by the French during the colonial period, and was chiefly directed toward converting and holding the Indians. The Jesuit, Capuchin, and other priests who conducted this enterprise wrote some of the most glorious and thrilling chapters in the history of missionary effort; but involved as they were in the protracted struggle between England and France for possession of this region, they found their work always in peril and finally saw it for the most part ruined through the wellnigh inevitable victory of the English. After a century and a half of heroic exertions, at the close of the colonial period not a Catholic priest was left on the soil of New England, and no openly professed Catholics, save for the faithful Abenaki tribes of Maine.

With the freer conditions that followed the Revolution, there set in the second attempt, which was, perhaps, less romantic and colorful than the preceding one, but infinitely more fruitful in concrete results. Now that religious liberty was established, Catholic congregations could be formed in Boston (1788) and elsewhere, and even a Diocese of Boston (1808), though this was long considered the weakest and least hopeful of all American sees. But what completely transformed the situation was the rise, from about 1820 onward, of Catholic immigration from Europe. At first the immigrants were mainly, and then for a long time almost exclusively, Irish; but in the late nineteenth century French-Canadians, Portuguese, Italians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Syrians came to swell and to predominate in the movement. For a century — down to the restrictions on immigration in the 1920's — year by year they came and came — by brigs and barks and timber-ships, by sailing packets

and steam packets, and finally in great transatlantic liners — usually as quiet and unnoticed as the falling leaves of autumn. But the cumulative effect was tremendous. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Catholics outnumbered any other religious denomination in Massachusetts, and fifty years later, they were twice as numerous as all the other denominations combined.

That this flooding of an erstwhile Protestant and almost purely Anglo-Saxon commonwealth with “foreigners” and “Papists” should have evoked a vehement and at times physically violent opposition was, in view of much past history, almost inevitable. The various phases of that opposition make up a large part — and a particularly stirring part — of our diocesan history in the past century: the Nativist movement of the 1830’s and ’40’s, the Know-Nothing movement of the 1850’s, the A.P.A. movement of the 1890’s; and such episodes as the burning of the Charlestown convent in 1834, the Broad Street and Montgomery Guards Riots of 1837, the Convent Inspection Committee of 1855, or the battles over the School Question in 1888-1889. In recalling these events today, we may draw inspiration from the courage, patience, and self-restraint under dire provocation displayed by our forbears in the Faith; but it is well, also, for us to remember that in almost every struggle for their rights the Catholics here have been helped by liberal-minded Protestants, and have owed their final victory largely to the sense of justice and the loyalty to democratic principles always shown in the long run by the majority of Massachusetts citizens.

But the most important part of our diocesan history is not to be found in these periods of tension and conflict. It lies rather in the spiritual work accomplished: in the preservation in an, in many ways, hostile atmosphere and the enrichment of the faith which the Catholic immigrants brought here, and in the spreading of that faith; and in the multiplication of all the means that can serve these ends — churches, schools, colleges, seminaries, monasteries and convents, juniorates and novitiates, retreat-houses, hospitals, orphanages, homes and asylums, laymen’s organizations, work for youth, the religious press, mis-



sionary societies, etc. In a word, it lies in the upbuilding here of a healthy and fervent and active Catholic society, a dynamic unit of the Church Universal, which is the Body of Christ.

For the signal success achieved in these endeavors we are, under God, indebted in the first place to the four great prelates who first presided over this See of Boston. No American diocese has been more fortunate in its rulers, in the privilege of having an unbroken line of bishops who combined high ability with the most noble character, and each of whom reigned long enough to accomplish a great work. It is time that Bishops Cheverus, Fenwick, and Fitzpatrick, and Archbishop Williams were recognized as among the most illustrious and beneficent figures in the history of nineteenth-century New England, among the names that people of all creeds delight to honor.

From that splendid army of priests who have served the Catholic people with tireless energy and unstinted devotion, a long list could easily be made out of those who, next to the Bishops, deserve to rank high among the builders of this Diocese. One thinks at once of such venerable names as those of Fathers Francis A. Matignon, James Fitton, Matthew W. Gibson, James A. Healy, Patrick F. Lyndon, Manasses P. Dougherty, Thomas H. Shahan; the O'Briens of Lowell, Monsignors Patrick Strain and Thomas Magennis; or of Fathers McElroy, Bapst, and Fulton among the Jesuits, Father Garin of the Oblates, Father Godin the Marist, or Father James T. O'Reilly from among the Augustinians.

Our history, too, is studded with the names of eminent laymen who have done honor to the Catholic Faith and have in important ways advanced the Church's cause. Such were, for instance, Governor Edward Kavanagh, Patrick Donahoe, Andrew Carney, General Patrick R. Guiney, Hugh O'Brien, Patrick A. Collins, John Boyle O'Reilly, Charles F. Donnelly, Dr. John G. Blake, and Thomas B. Fitzpatrick. And of no slight value have been the services rendered by the never-ending stream of converts to the Faith: by such people as Father John Thayer, the Barber and Tyler families, and the Taylors, of Hartford; Fathers William Wiley, William H. Hoyt, George F.

Haskins; Orestes A. Brownson, Dr. Thomas Dwight, and Rose Hawthorne Lathrop.

But no index could possibly list all those who helped to make this Diocese great. So many priests, so many of the faithful, who had a large part in its upbuilding, will remain unknown because their work and often their names have been forgotten as far as men are concerned. But their names are written in the final history of the Church, the Book of Life.

It may also be recalled that no history can set down the forces, nor even the principal forces, at work in the growth of a part of the supernatural Kingdom of God on earth. The historian describes men at work; he can only dimly guess, never discern, where the hand of God is busy. Sometimes, of course, God is most truly at work in those moments which, to the historian, appear most to be in the hands of men and furthest from God.

At all events, to one who looks back upon it, the story of this Diocese provides the most inspiring ground for hope that, whatever crises may be ahead, whatever difficult days, with God's never-failing grace and given the will to coöperate with it, men may still do wonderful things for Him, and even greater things than those that have gone before.

Future historians will be deeply indebted to Doctor Lord and his associates, Doctor Sexton and Father Harrington, for the years of patient, devoted scholarship which now yields its abundant fruit in these interesting and valuable volumes. Everyone interested in the history of the Catholic Church in this country will find in these pages an inspiring story of its birth, growth, and progress in New England, a story of deep faith and heroic courage, more fascinating than fiction. It is needless for me to say that the Bishops, priests, and people of New England will be grateful to the authors of this work, for they have greatly enriched the Catholic historical literature of the country by the addition to it of this interesting and scholarly *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*.

William Cardinal O'Connell  
Archbishop of Boston.

## PREFACE

THIS WORK was undertaken at the request of His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, who had long desired that there should be compiled a complete and accurate history of the great Archdiocese of Boston. In presenting this attempt to prepare such a history, after twelve years of research and writing, the authors wish first of all to express their warmest and most heartfelt thanks for the unfailing interest and encouragement, the invaluable help of many kinds, and the munificent financial assistance which His Eminence has constantly given to this enterprise. It is only fair to him, however, to make clear that for the statements and views — and what errors there may be — in these pages the authors alone are responsible.

The Diocese of Boston has existed only since 1808, and has ranked as an archdiocese only since 1875. But within the area originally included in the Diocese (the whole of New England) Catholics had already been active for over two centuries, ever since that great Catholic, Samuel de Champlain, in 1604-1605 explored and mapped the coast of New England, and founded the first European settlement in this region on Saint Croix Island. Here, as in most other parts of the United States, Catholics are not simply immigrants of recent date: they were here before the Protestants. This long and stirring pre-diocesan part of our Catholic history deserves to be related, just as similar periods have regularly been narrated in the written histories of other American sees. Hence the story to be set forth here extends over nearly three hundred and fifty years.

That story has in the present work been divided into six parts, arranged in three volumes in the following manner:

### Volume I:

Part I. The Colonial and Revolutionary periods, from 1604 to 1788.

Part II. The founding of the Church and Diocese of Boston, and the reign of our first Bishop, John Cheverus, down to the appointment of his successor in 1825.



## Volume II:

Part III. The Diocese under Bishop Benedict J. Fenwick (1825-1846).

Part IV. The Diocese under Bishop John B. Fitzpatrick (1846-1866).

## Volume III:

Part V. The Archdiocese under Archbishop John J. Williams (1866-1907).

Part VI. The Archdiocese under His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, from 1907 down to 1943.

The authors have aimed to make this not merely a readable and informative, but a scholarly, history. Hence they have endeavored to base their work as far as possible upon a first-hand study of original sources, and to accumulate a vastly greater fund of source-material than has been accessible to previous writers in this field.

We have, in the first place, tried to utilize as fully as possible the enormous mass of printed sources that in one way or another bear upon our subject. That includes the Boston newspapers through two hundred years, and much use of countless other newspapers and periodicals. But even more we have relied upon the unprinted materials to be found in archives, libraries, and private collections.

Among ecclesiastical archives, those of this Archdiocese, incomplete though they are for earlier periods, have furnished an invaluable mine of information. Our thanks are due to the Most Rev. Joseph E. McCarthy, D.D., Bishop of Portland, to the Most Rev. Maurice F. McAuliffe, D.D., Bishop of Hartford, and to the Most Rev. Francis P. Keough, D.D., Bishop of Providence, for permitting us to use their diocesan archives and in other ways assisting us in the kindest fashion. Mention may here be made of the fact that the Most Rev. John B. Peterson, Bishop of Manchester, whose lamented death is still fresh in every mind, on many occasions favored us with information or wise suggestions based on his rare knowledge of Boston's Catholic history.

The oldest and most important of American diocesan ar-

chives, those of Baltimore, were most graciously opened to us by the Archbishop, the Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, D.D., and were used with the greatest profit in studying over a hundred years of our history. To him and to his successive Chancellors, Monsignors William E. Mackessy and Joseph M. Nelligan, we owe a very special tribute of gratitude.

The archives of the Archdiocese of New York, lodged at the Seminary at Dunwoodie, were also made freely available to us through the kindness of the late Cardinal Hayes and of the then Rector of the Seminary, Monsignor Arthur J. Scanlan. We also had the privilege of using the Rochester diocesan archives — so important for the period of Archbishop Williams — through the gracious permission of the Most Rev. Edward Mooney, D.D., then Bishop of that see.

We are under the greatest obligations to Monsignor Peter Guilday, of the Catholic University, Washington, D.C., for having guided us with wise counsel in the early stages of this enterprise, and for having most generously put at our disposal his own rich collection of documents, drawn from many ecclesiastical archives, including those of Rome.

We are equally indebted to the authorities of the University of Notre Dame for the privilege of using the vast collection of materials for the history of the Church in the United States that has been assembled there — the Catholic Archives of America. We are especially grateful for the innumerable kindnesses of its archivist, Father Thomas T. McAvoy, C.S.C.

The Rev. Fathers of the Society of Jesus at Boston College, Weston College, Holy Cross College, Georgetown University, and St. Mary's College, Montreal, have assisted us most generously; and we are particularly indebted for the privilege of working in the archives of the Maryland-New York Province at Fordham. We are grateful to the authorities of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, for having granted us access to their archives. And for documents or information most kindly supplied to us we are under obligations to the Very Rev. Victor F. O'Daniel, O.P., of Washington; the Oblate Fathers of Lowell and Ottawa; the Augustinian, Redemptorist, Franciscan, and

Marist Fathers of this Archdiocese; the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, of Emmitsburg; the Visitation nuns of Georgetown, District of Columbia, and St. Louis, Missouri; and very many other religious communities.

We have also drawn upon the resources of a host of civil archives and city, university, and society libraries. Our thanks are due particularly to the officials of the National Archives and the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress; the Massachusetts and Maine State Archives; the City Archives of Boston; the Harvard Library; the Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York Historical Societies; the Boston Public Library, the Boston Athenaeum, the Bostonian Society, and the New England Historical-Genealogical Society; and the American Antiquarian Society of Worcester.

The inextricable connection between New England and New France during the colonial period and the close relations that have since existed between Boston and the dioceses just across the border have rendered necessary a large amount of research in Canada. The former archivists of the Archdioceses of Quebec and Montreal, the Rt. Rev. Canon B. P. Garneau, V.G., and the Very Rev. Canon Albert Valois respectively, have been tireless in supplying us with copies of pertinent documents, in the most obliging manner. The late Mr. Aegidius Fauteux, formerly librarian of the Bibliothèque de St.-Sulpice and of the Municipal Library of Montreal, was equally helpful. We have ourselves worked extensively in the Public Archives of Canada at Ottawa — to whose directors, Drs. Gustave A. Lanctot and James F. Kenney, we are hugely indebted — and also in the Seminary Archives of Quebec, to whose officials, as also to Monsignor Camille Roy, Rector of Laval University, we wish to express our thanks.

From Europe we have obtained a great number of transcripts of documents and information requested on many points. We are under special obligations to Miss Ruth A. Fisher for work done in the British Museum; to Messrs. Jean de Courbeville and Abel Doysié for long and laborious researches in the



Archives Nationales and other archives of Paris; to M. E. Laurain, archivist of the department of Mayenne — the homeland of Bishop Cheverus and other clergymen who worked in this Diocese; to Canon A. Uzureau, of Angers, a faithful and most helpful correspondent; and to the officials of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda at Rome for documents obtained from their archives.

Acknowledgment is made of the permission given by The Macmillan Company to quote from *The Protestant Crusade* by Ray Allen Billington.

To return homeward — it would be an endless task to list the innumerable priests and laity of this Archdiocese who have helped us in one way or another in the most ready and generous fashion. To all of them we extend our most heartfelt thanks.

But to some of them a special tribute must be given. And namely, among the clergy, to the Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of this Archdiocese; to the Chancellors of recent years, Monsignors Francis L. Phelan and Jeremiah F. Minihan; to Father John Wright, secretary to His Eminence, the Cardinal; to Monsignors Joseph C. Walsh and Edward G. Murray, Rectors of St. John's Seminary, and to Fathers Eric F. MacKenzie, Arthur J. Riley, and J. Joseph Ryan, members of the Seminary faculty; to Fathers John S. Sexton and Francis P. Moran, editors of *The Pilot*; to Monsignor Robert P. Barry and Father James H. Doyle, of the Catholic Charitable Bureau; and to Father William J. Daly, Diocesan Supervisor of Schools.

Among the laity we wish to thank particularly Mr. Michael Cadogan, of the Massachusetts State Archives, for invaluable assistance; Miss Kathleen Woodworth and Miss Ann Biggs, for years of faithful and effective assistance in newspaper work; Miss Miriam T. Rooney, for long research in Washington; and Miss Edna Marie Conlin, of *The Pilot* staff.

THE AUTHORS

# CONTENTS

## *Part I*

### CATHOLIC PEOPLE AND CATHOLIC PRIESTS IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND

I. THE LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS	3
II. THE CROSS, THE LILY, AND THE ROSE <i>A French Catholic Colony in New England (1620-1660)</i>	10
III. CIVIL PRIVILEGES AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES DURING THE RESTORATION (1660-1688)	20
IV. THE FRENCH MISSIONARY (1688-1698)	38
V. THE MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-PRIEST LAW (1698-1713)	64
VI. FATHER RASLE AND THE CATHOLIC INDIANS AFTER THE PEACE OF UTRECHT (1713-1724)	91
VII. FREEDOM OF RELIGION FOR THE INDIANS BUT NOT FOR THE IRISH (1725-1740)	135
VIII. THE CONQUEST OF CANADA <i>I. The Last of the Missionaries (1740-1755)</i>	161
IX. THE CONQUEST OF CANADA <i>II. The Acadians in Massachusetts (1755-1760)</i>	195
X. THE CATHOLIC QUESTION IN MASSACHUSETTS FROM THE REDUCTION OF CANADA, 1760, TO THE REVOLU- TIONARY WAR, 1775 <i>I. Under Governor Bernard (1760-1769)</i>	220
XI. THE CATHOLIC QUESTION IN MASSACHUSETTS FROM THE REDUCTION OF CANADA (1760) TO THE REVOLU- TIONARY WAR (1775) <i>II. Under Governor Hutchinson (1769-1774)</i>	247
XII. TOLERATION OF CATHOLICITY DURING THE FIRST YEARS OF THE REVOLUTION (1774-1777)	267

XIII. FREEDOM OF RELIGION (1778-1780)	296
XIV. HOPES UNFULFILLED (1780-1788)	326

## *Part II*

### THE ORGANIZED CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BOSTON FROM ITS BEGINNINGS TO THE END OF BISHOP CHEVERUS' REIGN

I. THE FIRST FOUNDATION (1788-1789)	375
II. DIFFICULTIES AND DIVISION (1789-1791)	412
III. FATHER THAYER'S PASTORATE (1791-1792)	447
IV. THE SECOND FOUNDATION (1792-1796)	478
V. THE FIRST YEARS OF FATHER CHEVERUS IN BOSTON (1796-1799)	520
VI. THE NEW CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS (1799-1803)	552
VII. CONSOLIDATION AND PROGRESS (1804-1808)	588
VIII. THE DIOCESE OF BOSTON: THE FIRST YEARS (1808- 1815)	632
IX. THE PASSING OF THE PIONEERS (1815-1818)	671
X. THE LAST YEARS OF BISHOP CHEVERUS IN BOSTON — I (1819-1823)	715
XI. THE LAST YEARS OF BISHOP CHEVERUS IN BOSTON — II (1819-1823) <i>Relations with Non-Catholics</i>	761
XII. THE DEPARTURE OF BISHOP CHEVERUS AND THE IN- TERREGNUM (1823-1825)	781

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

HIS EMINENCE, WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL	<i>Frontispiece</i>
CHAMPLAIN	<i>Facing page 6</i>
L'HABITATION DE STE. CROIX	6
INDIAN MISSIONS OF MAINE IN 1715 <i>Kindness of New York Public Library</i>	94
POPE NIGHT BROADSIDE, 1745-1765 Although the Broadside is not earlier than 1765, the verses probably go back to 1745. <i>Kindness of Massachusetts Historical Society</i>	222
FATHER MATIGNON <i>Source unknown</i>	480
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS	578
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>ca.</i> 1850 <i>Kindness of Bostonian Society</i>	578
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS — INTERIOR	666
ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH Damariscotta Mills, Maine, Dedicated 1808 <i>Kindness of Rev. Edward Lynch</i>	666
BISHOP CHEVERUS <i>Portrait by Stuart</i>	762
ARCHBISHOP CHEVERUS OF BORDEAUX	762



PART I

CATHOLIC PEOPLE AND CATHOLIC PRIESTS  
IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND

BY JOHN E. SEXTON



## CHAPTER I

### THE LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS

IN ITS BEGINNINGS New England may well be called the Land of the Holy Cross. The first Europeans to make a planting within its present confines set up the Holy Cross in their colony (1604). Thus they signified, according to Catholic custom, that they took possession in the name of their Catholic country.

In addition to this, however, these first Christian inhabitants of New England gave their island settlement and the river in which it lay the name Ste. Croix. This earliest colony was the French Catholic group of the Sieur de Monts, whose charter from the French King was dated January 8, 1603. Among the members of his colony was the famous, but not sufficiently honored Champlain, who bore a royal commission to survey the whole district, now called New England. In the autumn of 1604 he explored this coast, almost as far as the Kennebec. In the next year, 1605 (June 17th to August 2nd, N.S.), he completed this tour of navigation, going as far as what we call Cape Cod; Champlain called it Cap Blanc. (It had previously been called Malle-Barre.) There also the French set up a cross. On a map of 1543, that cape had been named Cap de Croix.<sup>1</sup> The French had intended to round the cape; and, had they succeeded, they would undoubtedly have set up the cross at their "furthest south," for the French claimed as far as North Latitude 40 degrees.<sup>2</sup>

The French King's concession to de Monts in no wise encroached upon what the English Queen Elizabeth had already given to Raleigh; the latter ended at the 40-degree line North

<sup>1</sup> *Voyages of Champlain* (Prince ed.: Boston, 1882), II, 79.

<sup>2</sup> For this section see Marc Lescarbot, *The History of New France*, edited and translated by W. L. Grant (3 vols.: Toronto, 1907-1914); J. F. Jameson, *Original Narrative Series* (17 vols.: New York, 1906-1917), I; H. Biggar, *The Early Trading Companies of New France* (Toronto, 1901).

Latitude below Cape Cod; the former began at this point. In de Monts' commission, he was to rule over "Acadie" and "the contiguous countries."<sup>3</sup>

Although the Viceroy himself and some of his company were not Catholics, the colony, like its mother country, was officially Catholic, and included a Catholic priest. He was a secular, named Nicholas Aubry, "of a good family in Paris." In this land of the Holy Cross beginning about July 1, 1604, he celebrated the renewal of the Holy Sacrifice of the Cross, and thus sealed the dedication of our land to the Saviour. This he continued to do here until, in the next year, the colony found a new home across French Bay at what is called Port Royal.

While the French were still at Ste. Croix, an English party, under a certain Waymouth, came over to this section. His group intended to explore the coast to the south of Nantucket in the English section of America, but by reason of contrary winds they turned north and landed on the coast of Maine (Monhegan Island and the mainland). There, finding no mark of European occupancy (for Champlain's second trip of exploration had not yet started), they too set up the Holy Cross; indeed their doing so is one of the proofs that this English party was also under dominant Catholic auspices, for they followed a custom long observed by Catholics, but never by Puritans.<sup>4</sup>

There also exists the possibility that, even before the advent of either Champlain or Waymouth, this land of New England had already been dedicated to the Holy Cross. For both of these explorers of our coast found there, near its middle point, a river, already named Sagadahok. There is good reason to think that this name was Indian for "the Holy Cross" (Sagrada-Cruz). The original name was given, perchance, by some early

<sup>3</sup> E. Lauvrière, *La Tragédie d'un peuple* (2 vols.: Paris, 1923), I, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Among the company was the narrator of their story, a certain James Rosier, thought by many historians to have been a Catholic priest. Waymouth anchored at the Island of Monhegan, on May 17/27, 1605, and weighed anchor from there to return to England on June 16/26, 1605. He had set up his second cross on June 13/23, 1605, at what is now Chop's Point in the Androscoggin. Champlain arrived at the Kennebec on June 21/July 1, 1605, on his way to Cape Cod. He returned from the Cape to Kennebec, on July 19/29.



Spanish or Portuguese explorer or fisherman.<sup>5</sup> This name Sagadahok was later adopted by the English for the colony which they planted here in 1607, and which thus unknowingly they, too, put under the protection of the Holy Cross. (Father Rasle's Dictionary gives for *cross* the word *Skahaouatk.*)

In truth, it may be said that New England was Catholic before it was really born. There is no need to labor that point, as far as French occupation went. As for the English also, it can be verified. Waymouth's voyage itself was part of the preparation for establishing an English Catholic colony in America. The plan was formed under the auspices of Lord Thomas Arundel, a Catholic, who had been interested in such a project for over a score of years. He was supported in it by his father-in-law, the Earl of Southampton (the Right Honorable Henry Wriothesley), who, while not a Catholic himself, was interested in the relief of Catholics. One part of the plan involved the transportation of "1000 of diverse sorts of husbandmen, laborers and workmen," to the territory "called Norumbega."

This particular project had been started some time before March 5, 1605, just after the English Catholics' disappointment in their new King's religious policy. Waymouth's voyage of preparation was successful and the plan went forward in the summer of 1605, only to meet non-Catholic competition and then failure in the autumn, when the Gunpowder Plot was discovered (November 5th). Instead of the original Catholic promoters, their non-Catholic competitors got the charter. These latter were able in 1607 to send out the first English colony to New England. Following Waymouth's itinerary, and guided to some extent by two of the Indians whom he had taken to England, they landed on August 7th at St. George's Island. These English folk (Popham's Company) started at the place where Waymouth had put up the Holy Cross two years before, and, as has been said, named their settlement on the mainland Sagadahok.

Both the French and the English colonies had hard going

<sup>5</sup>For untold summers, before the seventeenth century, European fishermen, especially French and Basque, had been coming to these shores.

and soon were practically abandoned. But the French colony was quickly revived and with it the religion of the Holy Cross. The Catholic Poutrincourt, who had obtained from de Monts the right to Port Royal, returned from Europe in 1610, to make a second start. He brought a priest among his new colonists. And by accident, the new venture's ship landed first in our present New England, where again the Holy Sacrifice of the Cross was renewed. The French boat was blown south of its course, the party made land near Pentagoet, and there on an island the priest said Mass. The island was called Ascension, because that day (May 10, 1610) was the feast of the Ascension. They all then went on to Port Royal, to rejoin those who had stayed from the beginning.<sup>6</sup>

The priest who came with Poutrincourt and who said the first Mass at Pentagoet was named "Messire Jesse Fleuche," a native of Lantage, in the diocese of Langres; he was described by one of the company as "a scholarly man, [who] received his commission from the Papal Nuncio, who was then and is still in Paris . . . named Robert Ubaldin."<sup>7</sup>

Among this priest's other apostolic works was the baptizing of over one hundred Indians, whose instruction, started by Father Aubry, had been continued after his departure by the young Biencourt, and was resumed by the new pastor. The Indians gave him the name Patriarch. His outstanding neophyte was the chief Membertou. Father Fleuche returned to France in 1611.<sup>8</sup>

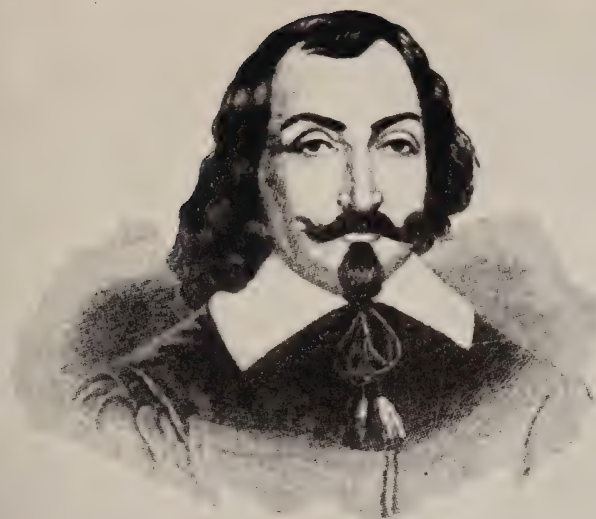
Then came the Jesuit Fathers. They had been commissioned by the King in 1608 to go on the Canadian mission, and finally Fathers Biard and Massé arrived at Port Royal on July 18, 1611.

In that same year, New England was again the scene of a renewed consecration to the Holy Cross. Poutrincourt's son, called Biencourt, traveled to the Kennebec country both to trade and to assert French rights against the English. Some English fishermen at Monhegan Island, probably the continu-

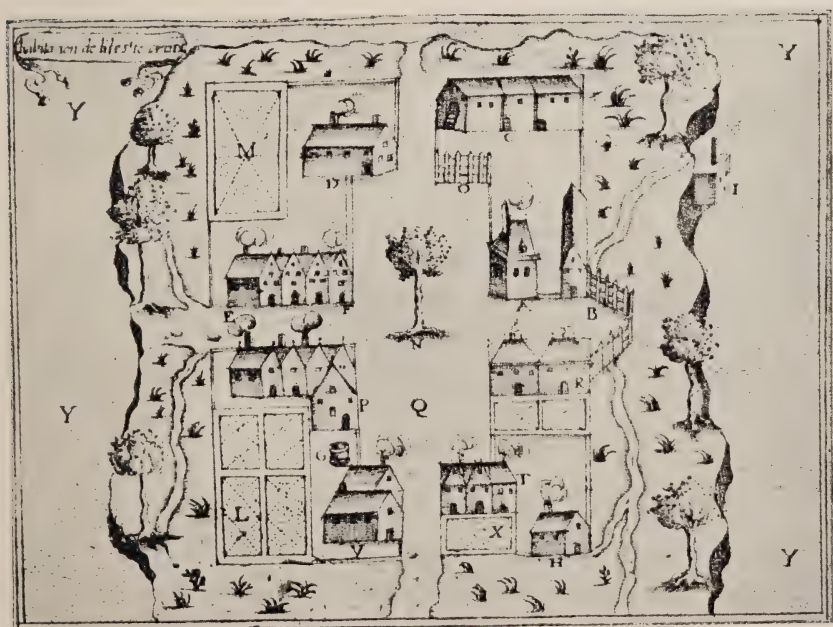
<sup>6</sup> R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (Cleveland, 1896; henceforth cited as Thwaites), I, 127, 138; II, 3 and 35; see also *Archivum Secret. Vaticanum*, in *Pub. Arch. Canada*, LIII, 31-34; LIV, 127.

<sup>7</sup> Lescarbot in Thwaites, II, 133.

<sup>8</sup> Thwaites, II, 119 ff.



*Champlain-*



L'HABITATION DE STE. CROIX





ation of the Sagadahok Colony, had taken captive the French Captain Plastrier, of Ste. Croix, in the summer of 1611, freeing him only on his promise not to fish any more in those parts. Biencourt, therefore, went to Monhegan, and found it unoccupied at the time. He left there a sign of his rights to the place, by erecting at the harbor "a beautiful cross, bearing the arms of France."<sup>9</sup>

Father Biard accompanied him on this trip, and both before and after the visit to Monhegan celebrated Mass on the mainland. The earlier occasion was about November 1st, and the place was an island in the Kennebec, about a day's journey above Popham's abandoned fort. The other was at Pentagoet, on the return trip to Port Royal.<sup>10</sup>

Not only the land, but also the people of this newly colonized district were dedicated to the Holy Cross. The earliest Catholic missionary here gave little crosses to the Indians, partly as a visual aid for their instruction in religion. The crosses and the pictures were gladly received by the Indians, some of whom proudly wore their cross upon their breast.<sup>11</sup>

The first teaching of the Jesuits, too, always included the sign of the Cross. When Father Biard first went to the St. John (summer of 1611), he took occasion to give the Indians there some pictures and to erect a Cross before their wigwams. Then he started his instructions, teaching them to make the sign of the Cross.<sup>12</sup>

Father Biard found that the Indians on the mainland were divided into two tribes. "From the river of St. John to the river Patugoet [*sic*] and even to the river Rimbequi [*sic*] live the Etheminqui. . . . From the Rimbequi River to the fortieth parallel, the whole country is in the possession of the tribe called Armouchiquois."<sup>13</sup> He himself, in company with Biencourt, had explored all that portion of the land "which the old geographers called Norumbega," including the principal rivers

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 47 (ca. Nov. 6 to 10, 1611).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 35, 47.     <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 79; II, 79, 151.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 163; cf. also reference to "a great cross erected in the public place of the Indian village on the St. John," *ibid.*, I, 79.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 69 (Jan. 31, 1612).

St. John, Ste. Croix, Pentagoet, and Kennebec. "Wherever and whenever we could do so, we offered the priceless Host to the omnipotent God, so that the altar might be as a throne, dedicated to the Saviour of men. . . . The savages have often been present; always profoundly silent and reverent." <sup>14</sup>

When in mid-May, 1613, the Jesuits started their own colony at Mount Desert (their ship was named the *Fleur de May*) they also erected the Holy Cross at that spot, which they named St. Sauveur. They had been there but a short time, however, when they had to witness the leveling of that Cross and the destruction of their settlement. They were attacked by an Englishman from Virginia, one Captain Argall, who afterwards "despoiled and burned Ste. Croix and Port Royal also. . . ." He destroyed "all evidences of the *French* occupation, and erected *English* monuments" in various places, declaring the whole coast to be under the sway of the British King.<sup>15</sup>

From that date until 1620, no colony, either English or French, existed in our present New England. A handful of French still lived at the Ste. Croix to trade with the Indians, but the larger body of those who escaped Argall settled at Cape Sable.

English fishermen and traders also probably had scattered shelters on the central Maine coast. These English of Maine, and especially those of Virginia, opposed the French occupation of Acadie, and although their motives were undoubtedly political and economic, they were also hostile to the continual presence here of what the French name and the Holy Cross stood for. Desirous of controlling a fishing business, which, even in 1618, was worth a "million in gold to France each year," they threatened to banish from this land the French name and consequently the Catholic religion.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 99.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 247, 251; III, 276; A. Brown, *Genesis of the U.S.* (2 vols.: Boston, 1891), I, 573, 664, 665, 725-734; *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series (1574-1660)*, I, nos. 81, 85, 86, 88.

<sup>16</sup> Lauvrière, *op. cit.*, I, 37; A. Couillard Després, *Charles de Saint-Etienne de La Tour* (Arthabaska, P.Q., 1930), p. 141; *Collection de Manuscrits . . . relatifs à la Nouvelle France* (4 vols.: Quebec, 1883), I, 57.

It may be remarked here that the French Catholic settlement on the Ste. Croix, which included a priest, also had a minister in the company. In fact, the leader of the venture, de Monts, was a Protestant. Both here and at home France was living under the Edict of Nantes. Undoubtedly, if the Arundel venture had succeeded and an English Catholic colony had been planted on the shore of Maine, there would have been both Catholic priest and Anglican minister among them. That would have been the best that English Catholics could then have hoped for, as in fact it was what they enjoyed in Avalon a score of years later. Had the earliest plans eventuated, the safeguard of tolerance would have stood beside the cradle of New England.

But when New England again came to be colonized, it was long divided into a northern part which kept the Cross and a southern part which rejected it. The division line in general was the Kennebec River; the differing colonists were the French Catholics and the English non-Catholics. The latter, after nearly a century and a half, finally made good their claims to the whole territory. Nevertheless, within a generation from the date of their victory, the Holy Cross returned to New England. With the American Revolution began the legal toleration of both religions in the land. Freedom of conscience was part of the epoch-making fusion of the New England States into the United States, and the first Catholic church in the town of Boston was dedicated to the Holy Cross.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> A detailed treatment of this period will be found in A. J. Riley, *Catholicism in New England to 1788* (Washington, 1936). This book contains an excellent bibliography, pp. 382-451; cf. especially pp. 434-435; cf. also L. S. Mayo's edition of Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts Bay* (3 vols.: Cambridge, 1936).

## CHAPTER II

### THE CROSS, THE LILY, AND THE ROSE

#### *A French Catholic Colony in New England*

(1620-1660)

ON NOVEMBER 3, 1620, the English Government made its first official use of the name New England. On that day it granted a patent for the founding of a colony between 40 and 48 degrees North Latitude, to be called New England. It was on the basis of this patent that our present New England began to be colonized by the English. As the grant provided among other things that no Roman Catholic should go there unless he first took the Oath of (the royal) Supremacy,<sup>1</sup> few Catholics came to the district, which remained virtually unanimously Protestant. The English territorial claim brought on a clash with France, in whose viewpoint all of New England was really New France, and this inevitable conflict was the more bitter because, on the whole, it pitted Protestant English, and, more specifically, radically Protestant English, against vigorously Catholic French.

### I

The Pilgrims came to Plymouth in 1620; the Puritans came to Salem, Boston, and the neighborhood in 1628-1630. In the decade between these events the main factors which run through the whole colonial history of New England were already manifest. The New Englanders' purpose to found here a home of their own came first of all. Their wish to be independent, especially of anything that savored of Popery, left no place here for the Catholic way of life, which, however, came

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies* (27 vols.: London, 1860- ), I, 24.



to another part of America at the same time and under almost the same circumstances. This first decade also shows the beginnings of New England's attempt to control the whole territory and the trade that rightfully belonged to the French Catholic colony to its eastward. This was but the first step in a more than century-long campaign between the two colonies, each as exclusive as the other in its religious outlook. Thirdly, this first decade also witnessed a Catholic program for converting the New England Indians, and thus began another factor that permeated the whole of New England history.

Shortly after the departure from England of the Pilgrims, and just before that of the Puritans, the more bitterly persecuted English Catholics were also represented in the movement to the new England, across the sea. These Catholics had again been looking forward to some alleviation of their sad status, because their country's foreign policy at that moment involved the marriage of the heir to the throne (later King Charles I) to a Catholic princess. Their old hope, revived from the year 1615 when the marriage became the subject of diplomatic negotiations, lasted through 1624. In this latter year a treaty was signed for Charles' marriage with Henriette Marie, sister of the reigning French King. When the treaty was carried out, it finally resulted in the legal presence in England of twelve Capuchins, acting as chaplains to the Queen, and publicly celebrating Mass and other Catholic services.<sup>2</sup>

The Catholic hope, however, rested not so much in the treaty as in the secret agreement attached to it. This agreement guaranteed royal indulgence to the English Catholics by promising "that none of the penal laws for religion should be executed, that Catholic worship in private houses should be tolerated, that the King should exert all his influence to obtain the repeal of the penal statutes in Parliament." In fine it obliged the King of England to do for English Catholics what the King of France did for French Protestants.

But it was not carried out. Charles (who had become King) dared not present it to Parliament, where the Puritans would

<sup>2</sup> Lingard-Belloc, *History of England* (New York, 1912), VII, 289, 315.

have opposed it rabidly, and where the Country Party would have voted with them in opposition. Thus the Catholic hope was confounded and a Catholic emigration to America was begun. It could not go to New England, because of this colony's patent prohibition. It went first to Avalon in Newfoundland, but soon sought another home on the mainland. In both places it lived under a charter, cleverly drawn up by Lord Baltimore, its proprietary, to make possible full religious liberty for all Christians, both Catholic and non-Catholic.<sup>3</sup>

The Puritans had reacted to the marriage treaty in two ways, one by demanding a new enforcement of the penal laws; the other by emigrating to New England.

For, when they saw the chapel of Her Majesty thrown open and the Catholic religion practiced there freely and by Capuchins to boot, who had come into England with the King's consent, they believed that the end of their evangelical doctrine was in sight, and made up their minds in considerable numbers to go and settle a New England.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the Holy See had been asked to provide priests for Lord Baltimore's colony in Avalon, not only to serve the Catholic settlers, but also "to preach the Gospel to the heathen there and to impede the heretical English, who have already gone there, from infecting the said people with heresy."<sup>5</sup>

In the early days of 1625, a certain Carmelite missionary in England, by name Father Simon Stock, wrote to Propaganda that he had

converted to the Catholic Faith a certain great man and some of his servants, who came to London on their return from a certain newly found island [Newfoundland], some three weeks journey west of England. The great man had asked for priests to go with him to that place and preach the gospel to the

<sup>3</sup> To the well-known sources, add Druillettes to Le Jeune, Jan. 1, 1651 (printed in *Le Canada Français*, XX [1933], 941-949; copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>4</sup> Cited in T. Hughes, *History of the Society of Jesus in North America* (Longmans, 1908), I, 196.

<sup>5</sup> *Archivum S. C. de Propaganda Fide*, Acta II, 208; III, 245 (copy in *Pub. Arch. Can.*); cf. also Hughes, *op. cit.*, I, 182 ff., *Cal. State Papers*, I, 94.

natives there, and impede the English heretics from infecting them with heresy.

The Sacred Congregation ordered the establishment of a mission there, to be carried on by the Carmelites if possible, otherwise by the Jesuits.<sup>6</sup>

Thereupon Father Simon Stock himself was commissioned by the Carmelite General to undertake the work; but he was unable to do so at that time, and some secular priests went there. Finally, some Jesuit Fathers went over and thereafter priests of their order cared for the Baltimore colony, continuing with it even after its permanent settlement in Maryland. Meanwhile in 1629, the Baltimore group having returned from Avalon to England were engaged in seeking a settlement place on the Continent. They did not wish to settle in any of the three English colonies already there, because these were inhabited only by Protestants. But as there was a likelihood that some Catholics of the Baltimore group might go over to America without awaiting the final settlement, Father Simon Stock was asked to go over, both to minister to these Catholics and to work among the Indians. Again he felt himself unable to accept the offer, for lack of men and means, but he informed Rome of the very recent departure of Puritans from England to America. It happened that shortly after this the Holy See established (November 22, 1630) an English Capuchin mission, undoubtedly to pursue the same ends as had been suggested to Father Simon Stock. The mission was given the title "Apostolic Prefecture of New England." The Sacred Congregation in making these decisions apparently found no obstacle in the mixed religious character of Lord Baltimore's colony, with which it was acquainted. The English Capuchin mission, however, never set out; circumstances occasioned its fusion with a French Capuchin mission which came to Acadie in 1632.<sup>7</sup>

In that year, 1632, Acadie was reorganized by the French,

<sup>6</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fid.*, Acta II, 208, dated March 22, 1625; copy in *Pub. Arch. Can.*

<sup>7</sup> Lingard-Belloc, *op. cit.*, VII, 289, 315; J. Lenhart, in *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXVII (1916), 196; in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XIV (1928-1929), 424, and 500-524; and in *Franciscan Studies*, XXIV (1943), 21-96.

after the English had reluctantly consented, by the Treaty of St. Germain, to restore to them both the New England and the New Scotland (Nova Scotia) unjustly created on French territory in the previous decade.<sup>8</sup> The French in turn had practically, although not technically, yielded their claim to the territory west of the Kennebec. According to diplomatic arrangements, the bounds between New France and New England were then established at St. George's River on the seacoast and the Kennebec River inland.<sup>9</sup> These limits, based on the fact of the English settlement at Pemaquid, Popham's colony, and Weymouth's voyage, also happened to coincide generally with the Indian tribal division between the Echemins and the Armouchiki. From that time onwards, for over a century, the French acknowledged no change in these limits on the mainland. But the English always sighed for mastery over the whole.

## II

Champlain was sent back to Quebec, and Admiral de Razilly, who had drawn up the French naval program and its American policy,<sup>10</sup> was sent to receive the restoration of Acadie and the contiguous places. The latter brought with him a colony of about two hundred men, and had as his principal aide his cousin, Charles D'Aulnay, who was to play an important part in the colony. They arrived at La Hève, Acadie, on September 8, 1632, and in the course of the following week raised the Holy Cross there (September 13th). Not long afterwards, Razilly took over Port Royal and Ste. Croix.<sup>11</sup> Pentagoet also should have been restored, but the English put obstacles in the way. Only on August 1, 1635, and then by a show of force,

<sup>8</sup> W. Williamson, *History of the State of Maine* (2 vols.: Hallowell, 1839), I, 220 ff.; Bradford, *History of Plimoth Plantation* (Boston, 1898), pp. 246, 247, 267, 280, 307, 318, 333; E. Hazard, *Historical Collections* (2 vols.: Philadelphia, 1792-1794), I, 298; *Cal. State Papers, 1574-1660*, I, 106, 108; *Voyages of Champlain* (Boston, 1882), II, 295-297; Lauvrière, *op. cit.*, I, 53.

<sup>9</sup> 3 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VII, 92; J. Winthrop, *History of New England* (2 vols.: Boston, 1853), I, 246 (henceforth cited as Winthrop, *Journal*).

<sup>10</sup> L. Le Jeune, *Dictionnaire Général du Canada* (2 vols.: Ottawa, 1931), II, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Lauvrière, *op. cit.*, I, 63.



was Pentagoet actually reacquired by the French, who in all probability erected the Holy Cross on the spot.<sup>12</sup>

The new Catholic colony, of which Pentagoet formed a part, was founded by a group wholly in sympathy with French Catholic policies. It was not large. Including the score of persons who had remained from Biencourt's time, and perhaps a hundred who had come out in 1630-1631, it numbered not more than four hundred. On the other hand, it was led by a commander at once able, energetic, and motivated by the highest Catholic ideals. Himself one of the Knights of Malta, whose distinctive badge was the Holy Cross, he sought the coöperation of his Order in his new colony, and in reporting to Richelieu, he spoke of having come here "to defend the Cross and the Lily."<sup>13</sup> Of all the lands in his territory, he had chosen for his own seigniory the district of Ste. Croix. In a letter to L'Escarbot, dated August 16, 1634, Razilly wrote of his regret at not having sufficient means for this enterprise, and asserted that if he had millions he would spend them on it as freely as he and his brother and friends had already spent fifty thousand crowns on it. His wish was "to prepare an asylum for all the worthy poor of France, who will be happy in this country of benediction," as he calls it. He mentioned the previous usurpation of the territory by the English, Scotch, Dutch, and the Anabaptists; and said that if he had not arrived there it would have been transformed into New England, "as indeed their maps already call it." By now he had some good forts, in condition to resist all enemies. Nor was it the beaver trade which enabled him to do this: he had spent twice what he received from that, in order to gain the friendship of the natives.<sup>14</sup>

De Razilly brought with him to Acadie three Capuchins.<sup>15</sup> By December, 1632, they had begun their establishment at Port Royal, and conscious of their whole mission already had the

<sup>12</sup> Winthrop, *Journal*, I, 139, 184, 198; II, 151; Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 395; A. Young, *Chronicles of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1846), p. 471; cf. D'Aulnay, *Mémoire Instructif, 1643* (Bibl. Nat., Fonds Français, vol. 18, 593, in *Pub. Arch. Can.*).

<sup>13</sup> Le Jeune, *op. cit.*, II, 506.

<sup>14</sup> Bibl. Nat., Fonds Franç., vol. 13, 423.

<sup>15</sup> Rev. P. Causse (Candidé de Nant), *Pages glorieuses de l'Épopée Canadienne* (Montreal, 1927), pp. 118, 114, 138.

intention, they said, "to spread out towards the English possessions on the Virginia side." They referred to Pentagoet, which still was in English possession, but which, when in French hands, would be their centre for preventing the Puritans from infecting the Indians with heresy.<sup>16</sup>

The Capuchins had been preceded in Acadie by some Recollets, three of whom came over in 1630 (after the Treaty of Susa), when the Company of New France sent out its first colonists. They resided first at La Hève, Cape Sable, where the young Charles de La Tour resided (Fort Latour), and they hoped to make some progress with the natives.<sup>17</sup> Later on, when La Tour decided to take over the former French trading place on the St. John River, they accompanied him to the new settlement.<sup>18</sup>

When the French finally regained Pentagoet in 1635, the Capuchins extended their mission to that part of the colony, also. The messenger sent (late 1635) by D'Aulnay to Abraham Short at Pemaquid was described by the latter as a "Franciscan fryar." He was the first priest to visit New England after the arrival of the Pilgrims and the Puritans. Although his name is unknown, one may assume with confidence that he was one of the eight Capuchins who were in D'Aulnay's colony in 1638.<sup>19</sup>

As it was the Capuchin custom to have a priest and a brother resident in each of their missions, Pentagoet evidently was thus provided; certainly there were two of these missionaries there in 1640. It was an important post, second only to Port Royal itself; possibly as being the spot most in danger from the English; possibly, too, because it was the appointed clearing-house for trade with New England. It had a fort, named St. Peter (from the name of the feast of its restoration, August 1st); it had its garrison, fairly few in number at times, but im-

<sup>16</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fid.*, VIII, 269, in *Pub. Arch. Can.* The date should be July 19, 1633, not 1632.

<sup>17</sup> Champlain, *Voyages*, II, 314, 315.

<sup>18</sup> *Archives des Affaires Etrangères, Mémoires et Documents, Amérique*, IV, 124 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*); Després, *op. cit.*, 228.

<sup>19</sup> Their names in Candide de Nant, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.

portant enough to rate a Master of Arms, named Germain Doucet. Its population of some forty men would probably indicate a total of one hundred and twenty or more persons.

There the second church in New England proper was assembled in a building, temporary enough to be replaced in a dozen years or so, but bearing aloft the sign of the Holy Cross.

There the priest served the garrison and the few colonists; there, too, he met the Indians, coming to trade; there, too, he returned from the mission journeys he made to the neighboring Indian settlements; there, too, perhaps, he looked forward to the starting of a school for Indian children, such as his brethren in Port Royal began about 1641.

In the year 1644 there were in all of D'Aulnay's habitation twelve Capuchin fathers, and at Port Royal a school with thirty Indian children of both sexes. These last were being instructed to bring Christianity among the Indians "who will receive instruction much better from their own children than from any other persons. . . ." <sup>20</sup> By this date, the colony had gone through a great crisis involving the English.

Weakened by internal divisions, the French Catholic colony under D'Aulnay finally became a victim of English envy. This happened, however, only after its staunchly Catholic leader had brought Massachusetts to terms for fomenting the Acadian rebellion and aiding young Charles de La Tour, the recalcitrant Acadian adventurer, with armed force.

In this conflict the Capuchins, directly representing the interests of religion, appeared first as seekers after peace and reconciliation between the two French rivals and later as D'Aulnay's ambassadors to Massachusetts. Their labors in these directions were motivated by their interest in the work of religion, and especially of their Indian school, which could not prosper amidst strife and the inevitable expenses occasioned thereby.

La Tour and his wife had sought Massachusetts' aid, not only by offering to give it a share in the whole coast of Acadie,

<sup>20</sup> *Extraict et Mémoire Instructif* (Bibl. Nat., Fonds Français, vol. 17, 593; Pub. Arch. Can.).

but by making their holdings into a Protestant colony. D'Aulnay's policy was to prevent the Protestants from capturing Acadie, not only for its own sake, but "because, if they did conquer it, the Catholic religion and the name of the King [of France] would no longer be recognized there."<sup>21</sup>

After the treaty of peace with Massachusetts, which was signed September 28, 1646, D'Aulnay was able to carry on his colony without interference for some few years. In or near the fort of Pentagoet, the Capuchins built a new church, named Our Lady of Holy Hope. This was to replace the temporary second church in New England, which had been used previously. Its cornerstone was laid June 8, 1648.<sup>22</sup>

The Capuchins also labored on the Kennebec, the eastern side of which was part of their district; and one of them at least isolated himself a whole year among the Indians to carry on his mission work.

During this same period, the Kennebec Indians also had contact with the Jesuit Fathers stationed at Quebec, and obtained one of them, the Rev. Gabriel Druillettes, as a resident missionary for a few years. His first visit took place in the autumn of 1646. It was the occasion for the establishment of the third church in New England, named the Mission of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>23</sup> This work was welcomed by the Plymouth people who had charge on the western Kennebec at Cussinoc (Augusta), and who even suggested that if he wished, he "could bring there some French people and build a house . . . and that [he would] be no wise molested in [his] functions." In fact, they added, if he were there, several English persons would come to visit him. "This last remark," commented the priest, "gave reason to think that there were some Catholics among the English of that country."<sup>24</sup>

The suggestion also apparently fitted in with certain proposals for trade between Massachusetts and Canada, which were

<sup>21</sup> *Bibl. Nat., Fonds Français*, vol. 18, 593, fol. 390.

<sup>22</sup> J. G. Shea, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* (4 vols.: New York, 1886-1892), I, 237.

<sup>23</sup> Thwaites, XXXVII, 240 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, XXXI, 184 ff.



made in 1647, and later renewed, but which finally came to no result. They did, however, occasion a visit to Boston and Plymouth by Father Druillettes in December of 1650, and another to New Haven by the same priest in September, 1651. These visits were diplomatic in nature, seeking armed aid for the French against the Iroquois in return for trade concessions. Although they were a failure from this viewpoint, they gave opportunity for several New England persons to manifest both a courteous hospitality to the priest personally and a willingness "to aid their Christian friends, the French and the Kennebec Indians, although they [were] of a *somewhat* different religion. . . . Others [had] no desire for war; especially, they [said] for the defence of Papists."<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, in May, 1647, a law against the presence of priests had been passed in Massachusetts. It had as sanction for the first offense banishment, and for the second, death. This action brought Massachusetts into line with the extreme Puritan party in England, which had for some years been compelling the enforcement of the anti-priest laws of that country. Some Bostonians likewise obtained the aid of Cromwell's ships in time of peace between the two Crowns to bring about an armed conquest of Acadie in 1654, and to drive out from there both the Capuchin missionaries, one of whom was put to death in the crisis, and the faithful French Catholics of Pentagoet and the St. John River district. After the conquest, Cromwell laid down the rule that no Catholics were to be allowed in the district.

The English held the territory until 1667, when the restored Stuart King, Charles II, promised in the Treaty of Breda to give it back to the French.

<sup>25</sup> Father Druillettes to Father Le Jeune, Jan. 1, 1651, printed in *Canada-Français*, XX (1933), 940-949. There is good reason to believe that Father Druillettes said Mass in the house of Major Gibbons in Boston on his first visit. Cf. Thwaites, XXXVI, 87 ff.

## CHAPTER III

### CIVIL PRIVILEGES AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES DURING THE RESTORATION (1660-1688)

IN 1660 THE STUARTS were restored to the throne in England in the person of another Charles, son of him who had been beheaded. Therewith England ceased to be a Puritan Commonwealth and became again an Anglican Kingdom. Therewith also New England, which had been a Puritan Commonwealth, was forced to defend its previous independence in both the political and the religious sphere. This it did with vigor and on the whole with success.

In this period it also followed up its initial policy of territorial expansion and thereby came into hostile contact with two other obstacles to its freedom. One of these was the patriotic tenacity of the Indians for their ancestral lands; the other, a similar French tenacity in defending their newly acknowledged rights to Acadie. Added to the economic factors of this conflict were its religious elements: the French were Catholic, the Indians were becoming Catholic. The details of this picture of contrasts were filled in by the fact that both the restored Stuart Kings were pro-French in their general policy, and that one of them was a Catholic to boot.

#### I

By the Treaty of Breda, which was "generally lamented throughout New England," France recovered her former holdings from Pentagoet eastward. But she was refused the district to the west from Pentagoet to the Kennebec. That section had been granted, during the interim English tenure, to the then Protestant Duke of York, who refused to cede, and thereby complicated the constant friction which marked the period.

The French governor, Grandfontaine, finally took possession

of Pentagoet, on August 4, 1670. The old Catholic chapel, built by the Capuchins in 1648, was still in existence, and plans for the religious as well as for the other needs of the renewed French colony were made. In 1673, the Jesuits obtained permission to send one of their missionaries to the territory "to assist the French whose spiritual welfare had long been neglected; but still more to ascertain whether it would be possible to establish missions for the Indians of that quarter." The priest, whose name was Father John Pierron, took advantage of his stay at Pentagoet to go to Boston, but although he went in disguise, it was nevertheless suspected that he was "a Jesuit. . . . For that reason he was cited before the Parlement, but he did not appear before it." By October, 1674, he had returned to the missions among the Iroquois. It is regrettable that nothing is known about his observations on the feasibility of Indian missions at Pentagoet. It is, however, known that in 1678, which was a year of peace both in New England and in Europe, the same priest again set out from Canada to begin a mission in New England. He did not continue long in the work, and no other Jesuit took up the plan for several years. They rather drew New England Indians to the missions established by them in Canada.

Meanwhile, the Pentagoet colony had again been plundered (1674), this time by the English agents of the Duke of York, who also took a hand in the settlement of the so-called King Philip's War (1674-1678). At the same time, these agents put aside Massachusetts' claims to the Duke's territory, and brought the idea of Popery nearer to the Boston Government: for the Duke himself had become a Catholic, and his governor was the Episcopalian Sir Edmund Andros, who had as lieutenant-governor the Catholic Anthony Brockholes. During the next fifteen years, both these supporters of the Catholic heir apparent to the English throne played a large part in New England history.

## II

During these same years other events were preparing for the

reestablishment of the Pentagoet Indian mission under different auspices. From 1678 the French Government took a renewed interest in Acadie, and later chartered a special Acadian Fishery Company to handle the territory. Bishop Laval was also interested in its spiritual development, and after some preliminary steps, erected Port Royal into a parish, and planned an extension of the Acadian missions.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop's idea was to give the field to the priests of the Foreign Missions Seminary of Quebec, of whom Father Petit was one, partly because he wished those priests to share in mission work, and also because he knew that the Fishing Company did not wish the Jesuit Fathers.

At this time the figure of the Baron (Jean Vincent) de St.-Castin at Pentagoet becomes prominent in this story. In fact, he was a primary factor in the reestablishment of the Pentagoet mission. He was a member of a noble family of Béarn, France, and came to Canada in 1665 as an ensign in the régiment de Carignan. In 1670 he accompanied Grandfontaine to Pentagoet and performed the usual duties of his position in the new colony.<sup>2</sup>

He remained an ensign to Chambly, Grandfontaine's successor, and distinguished himself at the 1674 raid. When taken prisoner, like the other defenders, he was so persecuted by the conquerors that lighted matches were put between his fingers to draw him to desert the French cause. But in vain. He escaped, and with the help of Indians took a message to Frontenac about the disaster. It is said that he returned with orders from the Governor-General to gather the Indians of that section in defense of France's interests. By 1677 he was the recognized leader of "the French at Penobscot" and united with those at St. John in letters to the Duke of York's commander at Pemaquid, doubtless in protest against the English claims.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dudouyt-Laval letters in *Quebec Sem. Arch.*; cf. also *Parkman Papers*, XXIX, 447; and *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 291, 314.

<sup>2</sup> He went, for example, to St. John to view the old fort; he tried the projected road to Quebec; he carried official messages to the group at Port Royal (*Memoir of 1671*, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, vol. 1); cf. Robert Le Blant, *Une figure légendaire . . . le Baron de St.-Castin* (Dax, n.d., 1937).

<sup>3</sup> Sept. 27, 1677, *Pemaquid Papers* (1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, V, 19).



Shortly afterwards it is known that he had married an Indian princess, and had been made a chief in the tribe. From these facts of his life, it must be deduced that he was brave, strong, ingenious, and in general possessed of the qualities essential, in the Indians' minds, to the office they gave him. But it must likewise be deduced that in those days he had no contact with a priest.

About the year 1681 or 1682 he came into his succession in France, with the title Baron, and what was said to be a yearly revenue of five thousand livres. At the same period, most probably, he took pains to have his Indian marriage approved by the Church. A word picture of him, written in the winter of 1684-1685, by an official of the Acadian Fishery Company, was certainly true (except for one sentence) in 1682. It describes him as living at Pentagoet with no other Frenchmen than some servants:

He has no fixed dwellings, does not cultivate the land nor interest himself in the fishing trade. He goes and comes with the Indians, whose nation is very numerous, being estimated at two thousand persons. *He is married to an Indian woman.* He carries on a very profitable [fur] trade [with the English]. Indeed, the few French who live between Port Royal and Pentagoet have as their only employment their trade with the English.<sup>4</sup>

One of the English with whom he traded was John Nelson, who was the nephew and heir of Sir Thomas Temple, and who had a high idea of St.-Castin's courage and love for his own home. These qualities the Baron certainly showed when the agents of the Duke of York, by letters and raids, resumed their claims to the French territory in which St.-Castin lived.<sup>5</sup>

Both the acting Governor of the Duke's territories, Anthony Brockholes, and his successor, Governor Thomas Dongan, who made these claims, were Catholics. At least one of their letters to St.-Castin contained the tempting statement that Dongan did "not wish to make any change in regard to religion, since

<sup>4</sup> *Mémoire Anonyme*, Arch. Col., C 11 D 4, fol. 181; see also St.-Castin to Bradford, July 1, 1680 (*Prince Papers*, Mass. Hist. Soc.).

<sup>5</sup> Arch. Col., Corr. Gén., Acadie, C 11 D 1, fol. 163; *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 291, 285; 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, V, 58, 89.

he himself was a Catholic, and had a Jesuit and Priests [*sic*] always with him." These circumstances, declared the French Governor who reported the matter, "render [Dongan's] efforts much the more dangerous." <sup>6</sup> As New York was then enjoying full religious liberty, inaugurated by the same Dongan,<sup>7</sup> and had among its residents a Jesuit, the Rev. Thomas Harvey, who had come out with Dongan, Dongan was evidently prepared to make good his offer to St.-Castin. Had the latter accepted, Massachusetts would have seen priests, Jesuit priests in fact, in the territories both north and south of its boundaries. But St.-Castin did not accept. On the contrary, he took means to oppose the English demands.

One of these means was religious. It happened that, as Dongan, like Andros before him, had incited the Iroquois to war against Canada, the Governor of Canada sent orders (June 6, 1684) to St.-Castin to repair to Quebec with (some) Indians of his district to aid in the war. The French Baron was thus faced with a serious dilemma. These orders would further decrease the number of Indians in his own neighborhood, for many had already been attracted to the Canadian Jesuit missions. So he sent some to the General; the others he kept at home to defend himself.<sup>8</sup> At the same time he undoubtedly petitioned the ecclesiastical authorities to establish a Catholic mission at Penta-goet. This fitted in with his own religious status, for long before this he must have sent a petition to have a priest bless his marriage. That petition was favorably answered by the Bishop, who, under date of September 30, 1684, gave to Father Jacques Bigot, S.J., an order to marry the French baron to his Indian consort.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time the Bishop sent the Rev. Louis P. Thury, one of his Seminary priests, to make a survey of the Acadian mission field. In the autumn of 1684 he himself went to Europe, not only to get a younger man as successor in the dio-

<sup>6</sup> De Callières to the Minister, Feb. 25, 1685 (*New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 266). Dongan's letter to St.-Castin was dated May 31, 1684.

<sup>7</sup> Driscoll, in *U.S. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records and Studies*, IV (1906), 5-53; J. Kennedy, *Thomas Dongan*, pp. 21 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Thwaites, LXIII, 61 ff.

<sup>9</sup> It is known that a ceremony of marriage with witnesses was actually performed. Le Blant, *op. cit.*, pp. 140 ff.

cese, but also to interest that successor in the work of the Acadian missions. Meanwhile, St.-Castin was in touch with Father Petit, the curé of Port Royal.

As a result of Father Thury's survey, a report was returned to Quebec some time in 1685. The section on Pentagoet, undoubtedly written by Father Petit, contains the statement: "It is not doubted that if a resident mission was established in this place many Indians of the English would join it in the desire which all these nations evidently have to be instructed in our faith."<sup>10</sup> The Seminary decided to accept the report's recommendations and to establish several missions, one of them at Pentagoet, when the new Bishop came from France.

The new Bishop, Monseigneur de St.-Vallier, arrived in July, 1685. He was accompanied by a new Governor-General, M. Denonville, who was very devoted to the Church and particularly to the Jesuits. The two officials had set out from France in the spring, one with five hundred soldiers to be used against the Iroquois, the other with six priests to be used as missionaries, especially in Acadie.<sup>11</sup>

Monseigneur de St.-Vallier visited Acadie in the spring of 1686, bringing with him several priests for its missions. Of these, he left the youngest with Father Petit at Port Royal, with the duty, it appears, of visiting Pentagoet. St.-Castin himself went to Port Royal on that occasion to see the Bishop, on whom he made a very favorable impression; indeed, he seemed to the Bishop to be exactly the person fitted to be Governor of Acadie.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Mém. des Missions de l'Acadie, 1685* (ms. in *Quebec Sem. Arch., Missions*, 8); Dudouyt to the Sem., April 26, 1685, *Quebec Sem. Arch., Lettres*, M 1, p. 2; Father Petit to Bishop St.-Vallier, Oct. 22, 1685, in Bishop St.-Vallier, *Etat présent de l'Eglise* (2nd ed.: Quebec, 1857).

<sup>11</sup> Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada . . . Msgr. de Saint-Vallier* (Quebec, 1911), p. 11. The new Bishop was not yet consecrated.

<sup>12</sup> Deductions from Denonville to the Minister, Nov. 10, 1686, *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 386; Ménéval to same, Dec. 1, 1687, *ibid.*, 410; more complete in *Parkman Papers, Acadia*, I, 531. Before the Bishop left Acadia that spring, 1686, he had formed the desire to establish at Port Royal "a small community of ecclesiastics which would furnish priests and missionaries, able to seek out the Indians, even into the colony of the English." Bishop St.-Vallier, *Etat présent*, 2nd ed. (Quebec, 1857), p. 41.

The priest whom, as has been said, Bishop St.-Vallier left at Port Royal to assist Father Petit, and to visit St.-Castin's at Pentagoet, was Father Louis Geoffroy, S.S. He had been born in Paris in 1660, and was ordained there by Bishop Laval for the Canadian missions in 1685. He was described by his Superior as possessing a spirit ready for everything, and having good natural qualities, united with a very sincere, supernatural outlook. ". . . He is docile and obedient and beloved of everybody, but is liable to lose his head and his health by practicing mortifications beyond his strength."<sup>13</sup> These qualities were immediately manifested on his mission. By the autumn of 1686 he was in Boston, where he took ship to Paris again to see Monseigneur Laval and also Monseigneur St.-Vallier, who had returned there. His expenses for the trip were paid by St.-Castin, from whose residence he had begun his journey. From there, also, the young priest, with far more courage than prudence, had written a letter to Governor Perrot, of Port Royal, declaring that one purpose of his going to Paris was to complain against him as Governor. And in fact, one result of his visit to Paris was that Governor's recall. Another result was the formation of a *resident* Indian mission at Pentagoet.

Father Geoffroy informed Bishop Laval, and supported his words by a letter from Father Petit, that at St.-Castin's there was work for two missionaries and great hope of success. 'St.-Castin was well disposed, he would not give the Indians any liquor, he would entertain and provide for the missionary, or for two, if they could be sent.'<sup>14</sup>

Undoubtedly Father Geoffroy also told in Paris about new English aggressions on Pentagoet,<sup>15</sup> and thus confirmed what Governor Denonville had reported as far back as 1685. "We have spoken of the Iroquois," the Governor had said, "as the declared enemy of this colony. . . . It is worth considering

<sup>13</sup> Dudouyt au Sem., Aug. 25, 1685, *Quebec Sem. Arch., Lettres*, M 1, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Laval to De Bernière, Paris, March 18, 1687, and June 9, 1687, *Quebec Sem. Arch., Lettres*, N 86 and 87.

<sup>15</sup> Beauregard, *Mémoire 1686*, *Arch. Col., Acadie*, C II, vol. I; cf. also *ibid.*, vol. 2, fol. 31.



whether the English are not the same, and to be feared in the future even more than the Iroquois.”<sup>16</sup>

When Father Geoffroy brought his own news, both the old and the new Bishop immediately ordered Father Thury to go from Miramichi, where he was, to Pentagoet to establish a resident mission near there for the Penobscot Indians; and the new Bishop (acting through the old Bishop's good will) made a definite proposition to the Seminary priests to send two missionaries to that place. This action was taken in agreement with the officials of the Fishery Company, one of whose reasons for insisting on a secular priest was the same as St.-Castin's, their fear lest the Jesuits would draw the Penobscots to Sillery and St. Francis de Sales, and thus away from Acadie.<sup>17</sup> They should have charged this, not to the Jesuits, but to the Governor of Quebec, who later admitted that such had been his policy. Nevertheless, the actual installation of Father Thury at Penobscot was still delayed; he began his residence there only in the autumn of 1688. For meanwhile, the Governor of Quebec changed his policy, at least in part. He recognized that Acadie also belonged to the King, and needed defense. Under his auspices, therefore, in 1687, Father Jacques Bigot, S.J., went from Quebec “towards Boston with his Indians,” with a double purpose. First, he wished “to induce their relatives who [were] still there to come [to Quebec] this spring and join us in the war.” But he also had in mind “the reëstablishment of the mission which [the Jesuits] had had among the Indians near Pentagoet.”<sup>18</sup>

In face of the changed conditions, the Superiors of the Seminary of Foreign Missions in Quebec showed themselves unwilling to coöperate fully in the plan of Bishop St.-Vallier. They certainly did not send Father Thury to Pentagoet in

<sup>16</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 348; cf. also *Parkman Papers*, *Acadia*, I, 471, March 10, 1685; *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 335 (correct date March 10, 1685); *ibid.*, I, 352; see also May 28, 1686, in *Arch. Col.*, *Acadie*, C 11, vol. 2, for letter of Dudley to Perrot.

<sup>17</sup> Laval to Bernière, March 18, 1687, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*, *Lettres*, N 86; Father Thury, *Relation*, 1687-1688, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Laval to Bernière, March 18, 1687; Denonville to Minister, Oct. 27, 1687, and Oct. 30, 1688. The latter partly in *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 443, with incorrect date.

1687. They had no desire to drive the Jesuits out of Acadie; but did consent to divide that mission field and to send Father Thury to Pentagoet, on condition that Father Bigot should also return and take over the ancient Jesuit field of the Kennebec.<sup>19</sup>

Father Thury, therefore,

left Quebec for Pentagoet, with R. P. Jacques Bigot, Jesuit, who went there with [him] by the Bishop's order, partly to install [him], because [he] did not understand the language of those Indians, and because Father Bigot knew many of those Indians, whom he had baptized. These good people received [the priests] with great joy . . . But after a short time, Father Thury had the sadness of finding himself alone in the mission, because Father Bigot considered it necessary to return to Quebec . . . <sup>20</sup>

As will be seen later, Father Bigot became the missionary for Kennebec.

So here were two French priests, and one of them a Jesuit, established on the very borders of New England, nay, even inside New England territory, according to the English and now the Massachusetts claim. Their purpose was to make the Indians Catholics, and at the same time defenders both of their own and the French rights against English aggression.

### III

Meanwhile, Massachusetts had witnessed the passing of the English crown to a Catholic, whose succession it had long opposed, mostly because of his Catholicity. Not that his Catholicity was the only reason of New England's opposition to the new King — he was likewise the heir to New England's increased resentment against his predecessor, Charles II.

During the previous decade it had been steadily losing its struggle for independence from the English King and Parlia-

<sup>19</sup> See the correspondence of Bishop Laval and Father Lamberville in 1699-1700, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*

<sup>20</sup> Father Thury, *Relation*.

ment. It had been compelled in 1678 to take the long evaded Oath of Allegiance. It had been compelled also to tolerate, at least theoretically, the rights of Episcopalians and indeed all others of His Majesty's subjects, except Papists.

It had been compelled to send to England explanations of its conduct under the charter, and finally it was even deprived of its charter. This happened under King Charles II, and left in Massachusetts very special hostility to the position of any English monarch, even if he were not a Catholic. When the Catholic James succeeded, New England felt itself in slavery under Popery. It had lost what it understood as its civil privileges and religious liberties.

In England the Protestant Party had manifested an increasingly bitter opposition to James' succession since 1672, when through James' public avowal, his Catholicity became known. Thereupon England's alliance with Catholic France against Protestant Holland was exploited to introduce the plot period, which culminated in the tragic events of the so-called Titus Oates Plot. The Popular Party in England spoke of this as "a damnable and hellish plot contrived and carried on by the popish recusants for the assassinating and murdering the King, and for subverting the government and rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion."<sup>21</sup> Let it suffice here to note that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* calls it "the creation of a band of imposters encouraged by . . . [Shaftesbury and] the most violent and unscrupulous of the extreme Protestant party, in order to exclude James from the throne."<sup>22</sup>

Bostonian sentiment was undoubtedly of the same character, but it had little occasion to express itself. No attempt was made here to form a Catholic group or to have Church services. But the Puritans showed plainly where they stood. In 1680,

when the Popish Plot of Titus Oates was in full course of development, and the nonconformist minister, Samuel Petto, sent over from England a frightful anti-Jesuitical account as well of the Plot as of "the Papist crue," Nathaniel Mather and In-

<sup>21</sup> Oct. 31, 1678, Lingard-Belloc, *History*, IX, 367.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, V 915, a.

crease Mather expressed their most cordial approval of the excellent Dr. Oates, and his very worthy exertions.<sup>23</sup>

When finally James came to the throne, February 16, 1685, signs of New England's antipathy increased apace. On the receipt of news from England that the Duke of Monmouth had revolted against James (June 1685), "not one minister opened his lips to pray for the King, hoping that the time of their deliverance *from monarchy and popery* was at hand."<sup>24</sup>

In that same year, 1685, there was published in Boston an abridged edition of an English book that was violently anti-Catholic. The English book, entitled "The Protestant Tutor, Instructing Children . . . and Discovering the Errors and Deceits of the Papists," had been first published in London in 1679, during the heat of the Popish Plot, and had as purpose the prevention of James' succession to the English throne. The Boston abridgment was to oppose the Catholicism which, it was feared, the new King would introduce in Massachusetts. It was a poisonous little book, and although it omitted much of the original, it still contained a bitter indictment of Catholicity.<sup>25</sup> The book taught, among other things, that the Pope's power was from Satan and not from God; and that Rome was Babylon.

In that same year, 1685, Pope's Day (November 5th) was celebrated with a bonfire on the Common at which two hundred were present.<sup>26</sup> Like the *Protestant Tutor*, so the Pope Day celebration was drawn from England, and was also aimed at the new Catholic King.

In 1679 the extreme Protestants in England

resolved to keep alive the fears and jealousies of the people, and to harass and intimidate the King. On the 17th of November, the anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth, [they

<sup>23</sup> Hughes, *History*, II, 107, citing 4 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 345, 347; Petto's account, Nov. 21, 1679.

<sup>24</sup> Randolph to Abp. Cant, Aug. 2, 1686; *Randolph Papers* (Prince ed.), IV, 105.

<sup>25</sup> Riley, *op. cit.*, 31 ff. The first English edition was dated 1679; the second English edition in 1680.

<sup>26</sup> Sewall's *Diary*, 5 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, V, 102.



put on] a most extraordinary pageant. First appeared the bell man, walking with slow and solemn pace, and exclaiming at intervals, "Remember Mr. Justice Godfrey!" Next came a man dressed in the habit of a Jesuit, bearing on horse-back the figure of a dead body; then followed representations of nuns, monks, priests, Catholic bishops in copes and mitres, Protestant bishops in lawn sleeves, six cardinals with their caps, and last of all the Pope in a litter, accompanied by his arch-counsellor the devil. In this state the procession set out . . . in the dusk of the evening, amidst the glare of several thousand flambeaux; perambulated the city in the presence of two hundred thousand spectators, swearing eternal hatred to the principles of popery and calling for vengeance on the heads of the papists . . . fireworks were exhibited; and at a given signal, the pope and his attendants were precipitated into the flames with a tremendous shout . . . [the exhibition] was repeated with variations in the two succeeding years [1680-1681], but in 1682 Charles recovered the government of the capital and put down the nuisance.<sup>27</sup>

Under James, Massachusetts had to meet the issue of toleration of which the King, chiefly because of his own religious persuasions, was an advocate far in advance of his age. As Duke of York, he had prepared New York's Charter of Liberties. One of his earliest acts as King was to order the discharge of all persons confined for the refusal of the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. In consequence, dissenters . . . enjoyed a respite, and Catholics and Quakers were liberated from confinement.<sup>28</sup>

In accordance therewith, James also gave instructions to the two royal governors who headed the Massachusetts Colony to provide that "liberty of conscience be allowed to all persons."<sup>29</sup>

The practical application of this in Massachusetts directly affected the members of the Church of England, who had never previously enjoyed such liberty in this colony. Some four hundred persons were gathered into their church here, but they had a hard time. First, they could not obtain a suitable place of

<sup>27</sup> Lingard-Belloc, *op. cit.*, IX, 452.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, X, 126.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

worship and had to meet in the Exchange. For the rest, they ran the full gamut of social persecution.<sup>30</sup>

There was no such persecution of the French Protestants, who were welcomed here at the time. For the English King's policy of toleration was announced at the same time as the French King's revocation of that policy in his kingdom.<sup>31</sup>

Under James' policy the Catholics also could have enjoyed legal toleration had there been any priest here to undertake their leadership. But none appears, except that French priest, Father Geoffroy, who was here three weeks in the autumn of 1686. There is no evidence that during his stay he said Mass.

There is evidence, however, that Boston had been opposed to Irish Catholics remaining in the city. The largest known list containing the names of Irish folk who might be Catholic is a list of persons "not approved of by the selectmen of Boston to be inhabitants of ye Towne."<sup>32</sup> It includes the names of Abraham Corbett, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, William Cearly (Curley), William and Joseph Jeanes, Francis Colinges (Collins), Henry Kenney, John Leach, Richard Leach, Nathaniel Carrill, Abraham Collins, Alexander Burk, Edmond Fitzmorris, William Bryan, John Brick, William Lane, John Tompson, Taylor (he came from Virginia; his parents and relatives are Roman Catholic), Mary Ornahan (came from Newfoundland), Madeline Brasier, an Irish woman came lately (1681) from New London, James Riely (that came from Ireland, another of Randolph's deputies), Thomas Lorgin (barber, at Dr. Coke's house), Bryan Neale of Long Island, Peter Barry.<sup>33</sup>

On May 18, 1680, the Governor of Massachusetts reported to the Board of Trade:

There have been very few English come to plant in this

<sup>30</sup> *Andros Tracts* (Prince Soc. Pub., 3 vols.: Boston, 1868-1874), I, (53); II, 63; *Hutchinson Papers*, 176 A, 552-554; *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, I, 204; S. E. Morison, *The Puritan Pronaos* (New York, 1936), 198.

<sup>31</sup> Mary DeWitt Freeland, *Records of Oxford, Mass.* (Albany, 1894); *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, II, 249 ff.

<sup>32</sup> *A List . . . 1671-1700*, in Boston City Clerk's office.

<sup>33</sup> Add John Keaine, the late John Casey, a sailor, Daniel Collings, Joseph Allen (from Dublin, Ireland, watch and clock-maker, graver and limner 1684), Patrick Inan, John Keene, tailor.

Jurisdiction for seven years past and more, and few or no Scots, Irish or Forreigners in the like time. . . . So there may bee within our Government about one hundred or one hundred and twenty . . . Scots brought hither and sold for servants in the time of the War with Scotland . . . and about halfe so many Irish brought hither at severall times as Servants.<sup>34</sup>

In 1687, one of the French refugees wrote:

As for Papists I have discovered, since being here, eight or ten, three of whom are French and come to our church, and the others are Irish; with the exception of the Surgeon who has a family, the others are here only in Passage.<sup>35</sup>

The coming of other Irish had been suggested to the President of the Lords of Trade by Governor Dongan, of New York, who recommended that "Irish colonists, who had no property to keep them home, be brought over to settle this territory."<sup>36</sup>

New England heard of its new King's favor to Catholicity at home, and particularly of his renewing public relations with Rome. It did not know, as Old England also did not know, that his policy was in part disapproved by Pope Innocent XI, who had exhorted him to temper his zeal with prudence and moderation. Both New and Old England were also ignorant that the same Pope had no sympathy with the religious policy then practiced by the King of France, and that he had solicited James' intercession with Louis in favor of French Protestants.<sup>37</sup>

Increase Mather had an opportunity to know, but he missed it, because he was convinced that Louis' policy was Catholic policy, and would be followed also by James.<sup>38</sup> When, therefore, in 1687, the new English King proclaimed a universal liberty of conscience, it was interpreted as but another step toward

<sup>34</sup> *Gay Transcripts*, Mass. Hist. Soc.

<sup>35</sup> *Report of a French Refugee in Boston*, tr., E. F. Fisher (Brooklyn, 1868), p. 30; cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

<sup>36</sup> *New York Col. Docs.*, III, 429.

<sup>37</sup> Lingard-Belloc, *History*, X, 205 ff. Note: Samuel Sewall to Israel Chauncy, Dec. 25, 1689, *Letter-Book* in 6 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, I, 94 ("[I] suppose you have heard that the Protestant Pope is dead. . . .").

<sup>38</sup> *Andros Tracts*, III, 128.

a Catholic establishment.<sup>39</sup> There was indeed a great sigh of relief that the other step had not yet been taken, but there was a deep conviction on the part of some, headed by the late Deputy-Governor, Thomas Danforth, that in the end, King James would do what King Louis had done. For the time being, however, they did what they could to win favor in James' sight in order to obtain a new charter.<sup>40</sup>

## IV

Although at that time Massachusetts did not get a new charter, it did receive by royal grant an increase of territory. James gave over to it the lands in Maine which he had so long laid claim to in his ducal patent. The Massachusetts Governor, Andros, then carried on there the policy long pursued by himself and Dongan as Governor of New York.<sup>41</sup> He spared nothing to gain control of the territory from the French and Indians, especially by offering to send them Catholic priests.

On July 2, 1687, St.-Castin at Pentagoet wrote to the Governor of Canada that the English had come with fifty men to take possession of Pentagoet and the rest of the coast as far as Ste. Croix, which they claimed as their limits. They forbade St.-Castin and two other inhabitants to receive any more orders from the French. "They went to all the places where there are Indians to tell them the same; and gave them many presents, promising them that they would furnish priests both to them and to the French. I must admit that I was extremely surprised. . . ." <sup>42</sup>

Andros' policy was highly provocative both to St.-Castin and the other French and the Indians, who prepared to resist it. It

<sup>39</sup> April 4, 1687, Lingard-Belloc, *op. cit.*, X, 249; Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 221 ff.

<sup>40</sup> Sewall, Aug. 25, 1687, *Diary*; cf. also Cotton Mather, "Parentator," *Memoirs of Dr. Increase Mather* (Boston, 1724), p. 102; Sewall, *Letter-Book*; Hutchinson, *History*, I, 304 n.; 4 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 507. See the rest of this text.

<sup>41</sup> F. B. Hough, *Papers relating to Pemaquid* (Albany, 1856), p. 130; Sept. 19, 1686.

<sup>42</sup> *Parkman Papers, Acadia*, XXVII, 519. This last part omitted in *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 399; *Parkman Papers, loc. cit.*, XXIX, 522. Denonville summed up the situation by saying that the English spare nothing to encroach on the lands of the King (*Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 9, fol. 61).



also <sup>43</sup> displeased many in Massachusetts, for it likewise included an investigation of the New England Company for Evangelizing the Indians, as well as the use of some of their money for sending Catholic priests to the (Eastern) Indians.

The natives [he wrote through his right hand, Randolph] are mightily inclined to the Romish religion. This, the French our neighbors well know and take care they shall not want Preists, for at Kebeck upon the River of Canada they have a bishop and several Convents, and their Preists are very laborious in converting the Indians. They are with them at Port Royal and at Panopscott; and visit and associate themselves with the Indians to the Eastward *in* this Government; by this means the French dayly gain upon them; and have engrossed all the Beaver trade, one chief cause of the trade with us.

I hear his Majestie intends to send over some preists to New York. I humbly propose it more necessary to have some recommended to that service *in this Govt.* . . . I hope yr Hon'r will see a necessity his Ma'tie please to direct . . . some preists also to undertake the converting of the Natives for which there is a present maintenance ready upon the place.

Besides, upon my [Randolph's] coming to England, I shall discover to yr Hon'r lands enough to so maintain a small convent without any charge to the Crown: Mr. Gibbon, a Benedictine at St. James Convent is my brother [in-law?], and was willing to come over and settle here: but I could not then give him that encouragement.<sup>44</sup>

In the spring of 1688, Governor Andros made a visit to Pentagoet, but as St.-Castin withdrew at his approach Andros found the place deserted. He left untouched an altar and church ornaments which he noticed there, but he confiscated the Baron's arms, merchandise, and household goods. He also caused notice to be given to Madockawando that if the Baron would come to Pemaquid and acknowledge his allegiance to King James all would be restored. Finally, he gave presents

<sup>43</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 403.

<sup>44</sup> Randolph to Sir Nicholas Butler, March 29, 1688, in *Randolph Papers*, VI, 240 ff.; cf. also Randolph to Blathwayt, April 2, 1688, *ibid.*, VI, 249.

and made a conciliatory speech to the Indians,<sup>45</sup> and undoubtedly mentioned English Catholic priests.<sup>46</sup>

While Andros was in New York after his visit to Pentagoet, the inevitable reaction to his policy, and that of the English generally, manifested itself among the Indians. Whether it was inspired by St.-Castin is not known; but it has been called St.-Castin's War.<sup>47</sup>

Andros tried to pacify the Indians. He only succeeded in further exciting the English against him. He issued a proclamation on October 20th containing terms to which the Indians paid no attention. He then raised an army and led it to Maine.

Then came a rising wave of New England resentment, including "Fanciful stories of [Mohawks], subterranean vaults, fire-works, French frigates, poisoning the soldiers, etc. . . . so apparently false and strangely ridiculous."<sup>48</sup> To these might be added Papist army officers, secret errands to Canada, betrayal to the French, meeting with a French priest, giving a new religion to the Indians, and bringing in Irish Papists.

The crisis had arrived. Massachusetts had a Papist King and a "papistical" governor. It lived under a hated régime of legal toleration of freedom of worship; it had in its midst a "papistical" church; it had a "papistical" approach to a solution of the Indian problem; its Governor was seeking Papist priests for the Indians, and had even consulted one, in the French Catholic colony at Penobscot, after having tactlessly and unjustly aroused this colony to war. Massachusetts had lost not only its civil privileges, but also its religious liberties, which last it had a "duty to defend." It was, therefore, prepared to join the Protestant Revolution against James, at the first news that this had

<sup>45</sup> *Hutchinson Papers*, 562.

<sup>46</sup> For the situation aroused by these attacks in England and France, cf. *Arch. Col.*, B 15, fol. 34 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, p. 131). The only point in question between the two Crowns was "the territory between Penobscot and Kennebec Rivers" (London, Dec. 11, 1687). Studies were to be made and new meetings were to take place in January, 1689, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 448, 453; cf. also Hutchinson, *History*, I, 315 n.

<sup>47</sup> *Andros Tracts*, I, 118; II, 50; I, 155; Cotton Mather, *Magnalia* (2 vols.: Hartford, 1853-1855), II, 586.

<sup>48</sup> *Andros Tracts*, I, 58.

happened in Old England. It sought to be freed now from what it called "the horrible brink of Popery and Slavery."<sup>49</sup>

April 18, 1689, the very day of the revolt in Boston, a *Declaration* was read from the balcony of the Town House to the crowd below. This document is said to have been drafted by Cotton Mather, then twenty-six years old. . . . But there can be no doubt that it was "most artfully composed. King James' Dominion Government is tied up to the famous Popish Plot. . . ." <sup>50</sup>

We have seen more than a decade of years rolled away, since the English world had the discovery of an horrid Papist Plot; wherein the bloody devotees of Rome had in the design and prospect no less than the extinction of the Protestant Religion; . . . And *we* were of all men the most insensible if we should apprehend a country so remarkable for the true Profession and pure exercise of the Protestant Religion as New England is, [to be] wholly unconcerned in the Infamous Plot to crush and break a country so entirely and signally made up of Reformed Churches, and at length to involve it in the miseries of an utter extirpation, (that) must needs carry even a supererogation of merit with it among such as were intoxicated with a Bigotry, inspired . . . by the great Scarlet Whore.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> For the charge of Andros' being French and attempting to betray New England to the French, cf. *Andros Tracts*, II, 27, 34, 48, 154, 160, 161. In opposition, *ibid.*, II, 103. For army officers, III, 35; I, 173; I, 172; III, 36; in opposition, I, 55.

For the meeting with French priest, cf. "*A memorial to explain and justify the declaration published . . . April 18, 1689,*" Mss. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*; see also Father Thury, *Relation*.

For the new religion to the Indians, cf. Deposition of Caleb Moody, Jan. 9, 1689/1690; *Mass. Arch.*, 35:166 and 167; deposition of Joseph Graves, *et al.*, Sudbury, Jan. 2, 1688/1689, *Mass. Arch.*, 35:120; cf. also *Andros Tracts*, II, 103.

<sup>50</sup> Morison, *Puritan Pronaos*, 193.

<sup>51</sup> *Andros Tracts*, I (11).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FRENCH MISSIONARY (1688-1698)

WHAT BOSTON DID in April, 1689, had begun five months before in England. There on Pope Day, November 5, 1688, the Protestant Revolution broke out. It proclaimed the Protestants William and Mary as sovereigns, and in the end drove the Catholic James from the throne. One result was war between England and France, which protested the English action. The war spread to America, where it took the form of an extension of the already existing Indian war into the so-called King William's War, in which the Protestant New Englanders were pitted against both the Catholic Indians of Maine and the Catholic French of Canada.

New England did not wish this kind of warfare. It desired rather to be at peace with the Indians, in order to be free for an attack upon the French. As soon as Andros was imprisoned, the men of Boston initiated this policy. They bribed Madockawando, the Penobscot chief, and some Pennacooks, and also desired St.-Castin to use his influence to bring about an Indian peace.<sup>1</sup> But, according to the New England viewpoint, Madockawando "treacherously of an ambassador became a traitor," and together with St.-Castin "deceived the government," while the Pennacooks, "by some evil instigation, the devil's no doubt, quickly surprised a plantation, and committed plunder and murder."<sup>2</sup>

New England historians, who speak thus, omit the fact that the new régime in New England continued to claim jurisdiction over St.-Castin's residence and the lands of the Indians. They also omit the fact that their offers to Madockawando were

<sup>1</sup> Mather, *Magnalia*, II, 585; Hutchinson, *History*, I, 335; Williamson, *Hist. of Maine*, I, 594, citing *Mass. Records*, 6:12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



partly withdrawn,<sup>3</sup> and that no sincere offer was made to satisfy the Indians' demands for just and equitable treatment.

The failure of the treaty attempts brought the Legislature of Massachusetts to seek another means of overcoming Abenaki opposition. On June 27, 1689, the Massachusetts Legislature, on the rumor of an impending Indian outbreak, voted to renew its former alliance with the Mohawks in order "to destroy our Indian Enemies, for a consideration to be paid them for every Indian enemies head or scalp they shall bring to us."<sup>4</sup>

Two days later, the House voted a reward of not more than ten pounds for every Indian scalp as part compensation for English volunteers to fight the Indians.<sup>5</sup> It had just heard the news that the Indians of Pennacook suddenly seized Cocheco (Dover, New Hampshire), killed thirty-three persons, the principal of whom was Major Waldron, and took twenty-nine captives, among whom was the major's granddaughter, Sarah Gerish.<sup>6</sup>

Here the Indian war entered the second phase, properly called King William's War. Only with this second phase has there really been any serious question about causes. The initial action of the second phase can be explained by itself as an act of revenge for the treachery of Waldron in 1676; but there still remains the question of what occasioned any action at all at that time, when Massachusetts was seeking Indian friendship. The answer to this question is simple. The Governor of Quebec had done the same as Massachusetts; he, however, was successful.

It is known that in May or June, 1689, he had sent for Taxous, the great head of the Indians of Maine, and it is practically certain that even before this he had engaged some St. John River Indians to fight on his side.<sup>7</sup>

It does not fall within the scope of this history to describe the Indian wars; their horrors are known to all readers; but it is one purpose of this book to narrate their religious side.

<sup>3</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 477.

<sup>4</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. John Pike, *Journal*, June 28, 1689, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XIV (1876), 124.

<sup>7</sup> Father Thury, *Relation*.

From the very beginning, this war was described as "a quarrel . . . between Protestants and Papists." So the Massachusetts Commissioners told the Five Nations when they met them at Albany on September 12, 1689, to renew their alliance. They were also quick to label some Indian propaganda stories as "falcyties, no other than a stratagem of ye French Jesuits."<sup>8</sup> The general notion in New England was that the priests were the French Governor's willing instruments to incite the Indians to an unjust attack upon the English. New Englanders made a powerful propaganda out of this and of every other connection that these priests had with the war. They not only charged the French priests with inciting the Indians to war, even to the cruel kind of war which Indians waged; and with opposing every effort of the English and even of the Indians themselves for a (just) Anglo-Indian peace; they also charged the priests with persuading the Indians treacherously to break that peace after it was made, and with accomplishing that by preaching what they called the Catholic doctrine of "not keeping faith with heretics."<sup>9</sup> Within a decade these charges were made the basis for the Massachusetts Anti-Priest Law (1700). They were repeated in all the Indian wars that followed, and have come down to our day as the true explanation of New England's struggle to defend its very existence.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, the French also claimed self-defense as a cause of the war. They fought to oppose the increasing English aggression that had marked the previous decade. Even before the Protestant Revolution, Governor Denonville had proposed

<sup>8</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 51.

<sup>9</sup> *Magnalia*, II, 612, 629, 626. The charge about teaching that Jesus Christ was French, etc., and crucified by the English reappears in 1709 (cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, 212). The charge that the priests taught the Indians that "no faith is to be kept with heretics" turns up in the New Hampshire Assembly's address to the King in 1699. See below and also letter of John Wheelwright to Gov. Dudley, Aug. 4, 1702, A. Baker, *True Stories of New England Captives* (Cambridge, 1897), p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> Hutchinson, the least anti-Catholic of all, *History*, II, 15, 55; Belknap, *Hist. of New Hampshire*, I, 253-254; Sullivan, *Hist. of Maine* (Boston, 1795), 98, 251, 259; Gov. Lincoln, in I *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, I (1831), 435; II (1847), 169; William Willis, *ibid.*, I (1831), 287 (2nd ed.: 1865); Williamson, *Hist. of Maine* (Hallowell, Maine, 1839), I, 595, 639; John Godfrey, I *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VII (1876); cf. also J. C. Webster, *Acadia* (St. John, N.B., 1934), pp. 3 ff.

to make a counter-attack on New England and New York. And after the Revolution, the Paris authorities expressed their belief that "the inhabitants of those places, who are Protestants, will not fail to side [against James] and will no longer preserve any moderation in our regard" in Canada.<sup>11</sup>

It was not an innocent New England that Canada opposed and feared. There was some reason for its opposition, and much reason for its fear; because at that date (1689) its population was 11,249, whereas New England alone counted 200,000 residents.<sup>12</sup> In fear Canada sought Indian help, and successfully.

## I

When some time in May-June, 1689, Governor Denonville invited Taxous, the great chief of the Kennebecs, to Quebec to consult, and was successful in enlisting his aid, it was not the promise of powder and of the means of subsistence which accounted for Taxous' and his people's decision to side with the French. The chief reason was the friendship which existed between the two peoples, and this in turn was due in great part to the missionaries' evangelical labors. To strengthen this entente, Denonville had employed the two Jesuit missionaries, Fathers Jacques and Vincent Bigot, brothers, as goodwill ambassadors. In this sense both of these priests certainly had a great influence on the course of the war, even after it began. When the Paris Government decided (July 14, 1690) against the policy of seeking to domicile more Indians in Canada,<sup>13</sup> the Jesuits took up their residence in the Kennebec region, and during the whole war, one of them, Father Vincent Bigot, was more or less constantly with the Indians of that region. In the year 1693 he was temporarily replaced by Father Julien Bineteau, S.J.; but in 1694 he returned personally to that mission

<sup>11</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 449 and 453, June 4 and May 1, 1689; also Jan. 10, 1690, in *Baxter Mss.*, V, 204.

<sup>12</sup> Murdoch, *Nova Scotia*, II, 177; 3 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, I, 94.

<sup>13</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 14; I, 475.

and was given a helper in the person of the later even more famous Father Sebastian Rasle.<sup>14</sup>

During all of the period covered by Castin's and King William's wars, Father Thury, priest of the Foreign Missions Seminary of Quebec, was missionary at Pentagoet. In 1696 he also received a helper in the person of Rev. Jacques Deschambeaux, likewise a priest of that Seminary.

These French priests tried to keep the Indians on the side of the French, for, like every other French Catholic, they felt sure that the English had no rights east of the Kennebec. Their patriotic sentiment, however, was not their only motive. They knew that to allow the Indians to come into alliance with the English would make the former become not only anti-French but also anti-Catholic. These facts are beyond cavil. What is worth investigating, however, is whether the priests used their priestly office to incite unjust Indian harassing of innocent English folk and as the lever for the breaking of a just agreement of peace.

Details of the Indian outbreak at Cocheco (Dover) on June 28th (O.S.), as given by Father Thury, then stationed at Pentagoet, give opportunity of testing the story by facts.

While Father Thury's Indians were awaiting the return of Taxous from his Quebec conference with Governor Denonville, some Indians of the St. John River passed through Pentagoet on their way to the Kennebec to war against the English; but they said they would make no attack until Taxous' return. However, when they arrived at Kennebec, it happened that some Indians (the Pennacooks), who were allies of the English and also on good terms with the Kennebecs, told them that they would open the doors of the forts (stockades) which six or seven of the principal English inhabitants of Kennebec (*sic*) had made around their houses. This they did, and both the St. John and the Kennebec Indians shared in the massacre. "It was said," Father Thury asserted, "that there were two Iroquois

<sup>14</sup> Denonville to the Minister, Jan. 1690. He also paid the expenses of two trips made in 1689 by Father Bigot to Acadia "for government service." *Am. du Nord*, C 11 A, vol. 118, fol. 171½.



among them, who committed acts of the greatest cruelty, smashing the heads of little infants against the trees."

The missionary who thus plainly condemned this cruelty, as he also criticized the unplanned element in the attack, had a different attitude to the campaign that started after Taxous' return from Quebec to Pentagoet.

That return seems to have meant an official Indian decision to start fighting, and a definite object of attack. The place aimed at was the English (Andros') fort at Pemaquid, which had long been a sore point to the Indians. Father Thury evidently favored the plan. His account of the expedition, written to the Quebec Governor, is worthy of citation, as his own version of his influence on these Indians. His religious preparations began on August 7th.

Our warriors numbered about 100. Almost all of them went to confession before they set out, feeling that they might die in the expedition. For they were determined, as they often told me, to fight in the open if occasion presented. The women and children also, following the men's example, likewise went to confession. Afterwards the women kept a continual rosary in the chapel, relieving each other from dawn to dark, to ask God through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin that He would deign to favor them in this war. [This is what Catholics would call a novena in preparation for the Feast of the Assumption.]

The priest's story then told of the warriors' leaving the village on August 9th, and his accompanying them as far as the sea. After that the priest's story depends on the Indians' account. When they were ready for their attack on Pemaquid, it goes:

they first said a prayer in common . . . and then attacked. The next morning the English still in the fort surrendered, on condition that their lives would be spared. The Indians, accepting the condition, swore to observe it.

"Fear not," they told the English, "we are praying Indians, we will keep our word." And after the English came out of the fort, the Indians told them that they would never reënter it,

because they (the Indians) "had too much experience of [the English] bad faith and treachery, *and because the English interfered with them in the exercise of their religion* and their prayers." The Indians killed none of those who surrendered. They were even better than their word, for they gave the commandant a few prisoners to be his witnesses in Boston.

Father Thury explicitly says:

Before they left [Pentagoet], I had exhorted them, and especially the chiefs, who I knew were the best Christians, to see that there was no disorder, to practice no cruelty in regard to the English and not to get drunk. These things they strictly observed. They scalped no one: they killed outright those whom they wished to kill; they offered no insult to the English women and girls; and I can attest, as an eye-witness now, that these same English women are as tranquil and secure for their honor as if they were in their own homes. . . . And what I appreciate very much is that the Indians did not touch a barrel of liquor which they found in the fort, but emptied it in the street. As they began by prayer, so also after they had captured the fort, they gave thanks to God.

The fort was taken on the 15th of August, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>15</sup>

Father V. Bigot's part in these first incidents is not known, but as he afterwards manifested a great personal interest in the English captives, he may probably be characterized as playing the same part as Father Thury.<sup>16</sup>

One of the outstanding factors in this Indian war had to do with English captives. After the attack in Cocheco, some of the captives who were taken there were sold to the French in Canada, being "the first that were ever carried thither."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 477. This narrative of Father Thury appears to have been the source of his supposed exhortation, printed among *Governor Lincoln's Papers*. If so, the English document is merely a tendentiously manufactured caricature.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. his letter to Turfrey, *Baxter Mss.*, V, 455.

<sup>17</sup> Belknap, *New Hampshire* (Boston, 1792), I, 252. But see E. L. Coleman, *New England Captives carried to Canada* (2 vols.: Portland, 1925), I, 114.

One of these was Sarah Gerrish, the seven-year-old granddaughter of Major Waldron. She was bought of the Indians by Madame de Champigny, wife of the Intendant, who sent her to the Convent of the Hôtel Dieu at Montreal for her schooling. She was later exchanged and returned home.<sup>18</sup>

Also among the captives were Mrs. Richard (Grizel) Otis and her infant daughter, Christine. They were redeemed by M. de Maricour, naval captain.<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Otis had been born in Berwick, Maine, daughter of James Warren, Scotch Protestant, and of Marguerite —, Irish Catholic. Their fascinating story is a further illustration of the humanity of the French and the kindly and — if not in New England eyes — Christian attitude of the priests.

John Gyles (taken at Pemaquid), who later in life wrote his memoirs, paid grateful tribute to the priest of the St. John River, Father Simon. Gyles wrote: "The priest of this river was of the Order of St. Francis, a gentleman of a humane, generous disposition. In his sermons, he severely reprimanded the Indians for their barbarities to captives. He would often tell them that excepting their errors in religion, the English were a better people than themselves." Among other indications of the priest's difficulties and his character is the following: Two Indians, disputing the right to the boy, decided to end the dispute by killing him. "Honest Father Simon . . . told them it would be a heinous crime and advised them to sell me to the French" — he even offered to redeem the boy himself.<sup>20</sup>

By September, 1692, the number of English captives redeemed from the Indians by the French had become so large that their support was a burden to the Canadian Government.<sup>21</sup>

All this is not to say that the missionaries so controlled the Indians as to be able to prevent cruelties. In this regard the

<sup>18</sup> Frontenac to the Minister, Nov. 12, 1690, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 11, fol. 168; cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, 190 n.

<sup>19</sup> Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 147.

<sup>20</sup> J. Gyles, *Memoirs* (Boston, 1736). Mrs. Gyles and her two little daughters were redeemed and returned; John's elder brother also was alive when John returned from captivity.

<sup>21</sup> Frontenac to the Minister, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 2, fols. 4 and 12; cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 73 and 132.

following citation is meaningful. It is drawn from the report of a high Canadian official:

Care must be taken lest the Indians get drunk, for in this condition they commit all kinds of abominations. The missionaries and priests who govern them have much to suffer in such circumstances and are very desirous that no drink be given to the Indians. . . .<sup>22</sup>

These first incidents show to what extent the priests deserved their New England reputation. The Indians made their own decisions about going to war, choosing their allies and picking their point of attack, although it is justly said that their decision depended in great part on their affection for the missionaries. Indeed the Indians often told the English that "had the English been as careful to instruct us as the French, we had been of your religion."<sup>23</sup> It is also justly said that, through the presence of these same missionaries, New England was assured of less barbarous treatment in the war than it would have had otherwise. The missionaries were at least partially successful in their attempts to prevent the Indians from getting drunk, a state in which their "worst savageries" were committed. The missionaries likewise strove to prevent the Indians from taking scalps or even killing their captives. It can hardly be doubted that through the missionaries' influence, redemption of captives by the French was introduced, to offset these barbarities. (Part of the reason was the information obtainable from captives.)

For Cotton Mather, however, it was not the French missionary, but "The Mercy of God" that

inclined the French to buy the captives out of the hands of the Indians and use them with an exemplary humanity and civility. The mercy of God preserved many of them alive under prodigious and incredible hardships, and at length returned many scores of them home. And may not our English women,

<sup>22</sup> Champigny to the Minister, Oct. 12, 1691, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 11, fol. 281 (*Can. Arch.*, p. 520).

<sup>23</sup> Mather, *Magnalia*, II, 264.



that were prisoners, take notice of one singular mercy shown by God unto them, in preserving them from violations by the outrageous lusts of the savages?<sup>24</sup>

One must be mindful also in judging those days that some of the English whom the Indians attacked were what Cotton Mather himself in one place calls "wild English." He has no praise for those English settlers of the distressed country who had no churches or ministers among them, who had no prayers in their families, who had done no missionary work among the Indians, who on the contrary were themselves stained by the very vices of the Indians, and who in one passage were called by him "bloody merchants of the souls of the Indians."<sup>25</sup>

One great lack in Mather's history was recognized by the minister himself, when he said: "Here I will *not* enquire whether those that went before us might never be too forward in any unjustifiable encroachments to possess and command those lands which have since proved so expensive to us."<sup>26</sup>

## II

Before any of the later attacks by the French and Indians was either planned or carried out, in the winter and spring of 1690, and, it was claimed by the French, even before the first attack itself, the Massachusetts leaders had started to plan a grand campaign against all Acadia and Canada.<sup>27</sup> While their offensive was in preparation, they suffered other Indian attacks, which intensified their own warlike spirit.<sup>28</sup>

The first campaign of the English offensive was undertaken against Port Royal. On April 28th, O.S. (May 8th, N.S.) the flotilla of three warships and four ketches, containing more than seven hundred men, under the command of Sir William Phips,<sup>29</sup> set sail from Boston Harbor. On May 10/20th it anchored off Port Royal and Phips demanded surrender of the

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 625.      <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 658 ff.      <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 662.

<sup>27</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, V, 30, 46, 50, 52, 59, 62; *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 472.

<sup>28</sup> *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 459-491; cf. also 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VII, 60.

<sup>29</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, V, 63, 67, 74.

town. Priests were also connected with this story, for the French Governor of Acadie, M. Ménéval, having at hand only seventy soldiers with no officers among them, took counsel with the two priests of Port Royal, Father Petit, the curé, and Father Trouvé, his assistant. Finally he sent Father Petit to General Phips to get the best terms possible for capitulation. Among the articles agreed on between the priest and the English commander were one, That the church would not be touched and the priests would be maintained in their functions; and another, That the inhabitants would have their own property safe, and have liberty of conscience.

The English commander accepted these conditions, but when he went on shore and saw that he could have taken the place easily for lack of fortification and defenders, he was angry and, having found a slight pretext, declared that he was not bound by the capitulation. He then disarmed the garrison, imprisoning them in the church, and allowed his forces to spend twelve days in the city, pillaging and plundering. Among other places they plundered the priests' residence, and the Church, seizing everything the latter had in the way of ornaments. They then departed, taking with them as prisoners, the Governor and the garrison (fifty-eight soldiers and a sergeant), as well as the two priests, Fathers Petit and Trouvé.<sup>30</sup> Some English privateers followed quickly. "The English burned some twelve to fifteen houses at the cape and some at Port Royal, where they also burned the church."<sup>31</sup>

Before General Phips left Port Royal, he made the inhabitants take an oath of allegiance to King William; then he appointed a council to govern the place. Among the instructions he gave its president were these two:

Force no one to follow your religion; we hope before long to give you better instructions than you have hitherto received [art. 3]. You are to take possession of the houses, lands and

<sup>30</sup> Villebon to Chevry . . . in Webster, *Acadia*, p. 30; *Life of Trouvé*, ms. in *Arch. of Sulpician Seminary*, Montreal, pp. 39 ff.

<sup>31</sup> *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, II, fol. 168; *Memo of Events*, Nov. 12, 1690, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 474 ff.

mills belonging to the Sr. de St. Castin, an account to be rendered when it shall be asked for [art. 6].<sup>32</sup>

On May 30th, the prisoners aboard the victorious fleet arrived at Boston, where, it was said, they "suffered much during the winter [*sic*] from the fanaticism and harshness of the English."<sup>33</sup> For three months Governor Ménéval and the two priests were held incommunicado; after that Ménéval and Father Petit continued in prison, the latter until after Phips had left for London in the winter. Then the authority at Boston admitted that there had been a capitulation at Port Royal and that Phips had broken it; finally Governor Ménéval and Father Petit were set at liberty.<sup>34</sup>

There was apparently no other reason for Phips' imprisonment of the two priests but their being priests. He thus prevented further Catholic worship in Port Royal. Father Petit's case was especially remarkable. During the fifteen years which he had already spent in Acadie, he had shown himself a truly good and zealous clergyman, and had given no sign of hating the English. In large measure, indeed, he depended on them for much-needed supplies, because he did not get along well with the officials of the Acadian Fishery Company, whose unjust use of their trade monopoly and whose liquor traffic with the Indians he had stoutly opposed.<sup>35</sup>

When Father Petit returned to Port Royal, probably in the spring of 1691, he still had to suffer difficulties there. He was accused by the officials of the Fishery Company of being disloyal to France, not only because he had been largely instrumental in the capitulation, but also because he still insisted on the Acadians' obligation to keep the oath of allegiance given to Phips. He was complained of to the King and to the Bishop, and finally was removed from the position of *curé*.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Villebon to Chevre, in Webster, *Acadia*, pp. 24, 30.

<sup>33</sup> *Life of Trouvé, Ms. Sulp. Sem., Montreal*, p. 39 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Ménéval to the Minister, at Paris, April 6, 1691, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 40.

<sup>35</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, I, 468, 474; cf. Goutin's Memo in *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, II, fol. 168, 172, 174.

<sup>36</sup> *Arch. Col.*, B 16-1, fol. 57; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 52, 148, 155; B 17-1, fol. 73½; Webster, *Acadia*, p. 49.

Meanwhile, from early 1690, the New England plan for attacking Quebec was being completed by the English colonies. The success at Port Royal was considered an auspicious portent, and the same religious ideas that had been shown in that expedition were manifest in this also.

Less than three months after returning from Port Royal, the fleet, again under General Phips, sailed from Boston (August 9, 1690) for the attack on Quebec. This time, it consisted of some thirty to forty vessels and some two thousand men. A land army, including Indians, marching first against Montreal, was to coöperate with it. Father Trouvé was taken along, probably to serve as interpreter.<sup>37</sup>

On September 18, 1690 (N.S.), Phips made a descent on the Isle Percée and Bonaventure, plundered the sacred vessels and furnishings of the church, and burned both church and priests' house.<sup>38</sup> On October 16th (N.S.) he was at Quebec, ready to capture it also, and subject it to like treatment. But here he did not succeed. After a futile demand for capitulation and an equally futile attack on the city, he withdrew (October 23rd).<sup>39</sup>

In the end, his anticipations were reduced to the exchange of some prisoners. He delivered the *Sieur Grandville* and Father Trouvé for some English captives, including the girl Sarah Gerrish. Even here there was at first an English refusal to include the priest.

Phips returned to Boston on November 19th (O.S.). What with the totally unexpected defeat, the consequent need of paying the expenses of the expedition (which it had been hoped the booty would more than cover), the near mutiny of the soldiers at not receiving their pay, and the spread of smallpox in the city, Boston was quite sad. "The smiles of God" which were upon them in the Port Royal expedition had changed

<sup>37</sup> Other French prisoners were taken along with him, probably to be employed in various ways after the expected victory.

<sup>38</sup> *Arch Col.*, 11 F, vol. 11 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*), p. 352.

<sup>39</sup> M. E. Myrand, 1690, *Sir William Phips devant Quebec* (Quebec, 1893). This work contains 19 contemporaneous accounts of the siege, among others those of Frontenac and Phips. Frontenac to Minister, C 11, vol. 11, fol. 197, Nov. 12, 1690.



to his "awfull Frowne" in the "chargable and Hazerdous Enterprize" against Canada. Sir William set out for England to make certain of a greater and a successful attempt the next year.<sup>40</sup>

The English defeat at Quebec and a subsequent French victory in Nova Scotia had its effect on the Maine Indians as well as on Massachusetts. It undid the result of a defeat by Major Church at their fort of Rocamego,<sup>41</sup> and turned them from the idea of making peace with the English.<sup>42</sup>

Father Thury's name does not appear in all this. Except for the facts that he was stationed at Pentagoet and that he carried on a correspondence with the French commander on the St. John, nothing in the documents refers to him. As for the Jesuit missionary on the Kennebec, the same was probably true.

An affecting glimpse of the former at that time (late 1692) is provided by one of his superiors, who wrote, in an account of his trip to Paris:

Being aboard one of his Majesty's ships, I was taken to the mouth of the Pentagouet River, where I had the grace of God to meet Father Thury, then missionary of the Abenakis and Kennebecs. He had not visited Quebec for more than three years and was absolutely deprived of clothes. I gave him everything I had from head to foot. Fortunately I had taken along some old things to wear on board and a good cassock, shoes, socks and underwear to use when I arrived in France. I left Father Thury every bit of good clothing I had, and I wore my rags, even the *tapabord* for a hat, until I reached the Seminary in Paris.<sup>43</sup>

### III

Despite their failures with the French at Quebec and Port Royal and with the Indians in Maine, the people of Massachu-

<sup>40</sup> Letter to the agents, Nov. 29, 1690, *Baxter Mss.*, V, 167; Hutchinson, *History*, I, 338-341.

<sup>41</sup> Sept. 14, 1690: J. P. Ke, *Journal*, p. 126; H. Sylvester, *Indian Wars* (3 vols.: Boston, 1910), II, 447.

<sup>42</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 3; V, 164, 175, 188.

<sup>43</sup> Tremblay, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*, Poly., IX, 103, p. 2.

setts in late 1691 and early 1692 saw the fulfillment of some of the hopes which they had based on the Protestant Revolution. They obtained from the new king a new charter. This document while not wholly satisfying, gave great joy in some regards. Its exclusion of Papists from toleration was one of these and was immediately implemented by the Legislature's passing "an act for preventing the danger by the French residing within this Province." This ran:

There having been frequent complaints made to this Court that although several French Protestants who lately fled from persecution come over sea into this province, were charitably entertained and succoured here; yet since that, *many of a contrary religion and interest have been brought hither* [prisoners of war] and others have obtruded themselves; which especially in this time of war between the two crowns of England and France is a grievous inconvenience and the public safety is endangered by suffering such a mixed company among us; For remedy where of:

It is enacted . . . that from and after the 2d day of January next ensuing none of the French nation be permitted to reside or be in any of the sea ports of frontier towns within this Province but such as shall be licensed by the Governor and Council. . . .<sup>44</sup>

Nothing was enacted about Irish or English Catholics.

The new charter also fulfilled some of Massachusetts' hopes by the increased amount of territory which it placed under Massachusetts jurisdiction. It raised the old colony to the dignity of a province, and included in its new extent not only all of the present States of Massachusetts and Maine, but even the present provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. (This last part was based on Phips' victory at Port Royal.) For many years afterwards, this charter was used by Massachusetts as one of its great arguments for territorial rights against the French. Nevertheless, the new charter had no more validity than the English Crown could give it; it could rightly cover only territory which English forces rightly controlled. As for the peninsula

<sup>44</sup> Cited by Belcher, on Aug. 10, 1731, in *Bradford's Am. Weekly Mercury*, Sept. 2, 1731.

of Acadie and the territories ruled by its Governor, indeed as for everything east of the Kennebec, the Government of France had appointed an agent to recover and rule over them even before the English King signed the new Massachusetts charter. This agent, named Villebon, actually regained Port Royal before the Massachusetts charter arrived in Boston, although he took up his residence on the St. John River.

But the English Government had taken means to make good its paper claims. Sir William Phips was appointed the new Massachusetts Governor, and commissioned to proceed with the conquest over both Indians and French. Within a year he apparently had brought the former to terms. Under royal instructions he built a stone fort at Pemaquid to replace the old one, which the Indians had destroyed. The new fort, like its predecessor, was an awe-inspiring deterrent to the Indians. It was the first and greatest cause of the increasing fear and want on the part of the Indians, which finally brought some of them to sue for peace with the English.<sup>45 46</sup>

On July 30, 1693, several Indian sagamores, including Madockawando, of Penobscot, and Edgeremit, of Taconnick, came to Pemaquid with a flag of truce, and agreed to a cessation of arms until August 10th, when a treaty of peace should be signed.<sup>47</sup> On August 11th, a treaty was duly signed. This is the famous treaty which it is said was later broken by the Indians, as a result of the priests' teaching that "faith need not be kept with heretics."<sup>48</sup>

To understand the situation, it is essential to emphasize certain points. First, the treaty was not signed by all the Indians. Taxous (Moxus), who was great chief of the Kennebecs and who held some kind of primacy in the whole nation, did not sign; and this despite his having signed the suit for peace. Manidoubtik, chief of the St. John Indians, did not sign either truce or peace.

<sup>45</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 52; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 570; Hutchinson, *History*, II, 53 and 55.

<sup>46</sup> Frontenac to Minister, Oct. 25, 1693, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 12, fol. 225; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, 226.

<sup>47</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Phips to Fletcher, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 5.

<sup>48</sup> Mather, *Magnalia*, II, 625; Phips to Fletcher, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 6.

It is also a point worth making that in the light of later events there is good reason to believe that many, even among Madockawando's and Edgeremit's group, did not agree to their leaders' promises or did so, as they said, only *par grimace*. On the other hand, some of the lesser Narantuak chiefs, like Boma-seen and Terremaugus did sign. In fine, the Indians were divided.

Secondly, the text of the treaty speaks of all the Indians "acknowledging [their] hearty subjection and obedience unto the crown of England." Even the text of the treaty mentions the acknowledgment of subjection as *implicit*. The Indians are described as laying down their arms, "*hereby* acknowledging, etc." In this regard, one may note that even if they had declared themselves subjects, by agreeing to what was read to them, it would have been due to ignorance. Hutchinson declares that from the beginning up to his time they never made submission nor even understood what it meant.<sup>49</sup> One may conclude that what the Indians signed was not an acknowledgment of British sovereignty.

Thirdly, the treaty was not unconditional. Although its only known text contains nothing by way of English obligations, the treaty itself did include such. Governor Phips himself acknowledged this, when later remonstrating with the Indians, by asserting that he had fulfilled all the things to be done on his part.<sup>50</sup> Two of these English obligations had to do with trade and territory and are sufficiently, although implicitly, set forth in the treaty. A third English obligation is even more worthy of attention. It had to do with their returning their Indian prisoners.

This was a matter of extreme importance to the Indians, as their whole history proves. In this case it is confirmed by the explicit statements of Father Thury and Hutchinson, who declared that obtaining back their own prisoners was one of the Indians' main motives for entering into the treaty.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *History*, I, 294; II, 203.      <sup>50</sup> Aug. 6, 1694, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 10.

<sup>51</sup> Explicit statements by the Indians of Panawamske and Amirokan to Frontenac, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 12, fol. 225, Oct. 25, 1693.



To quote Father Thury, whose relation to the treaty was so important:

It is certain that altho the majority of our Indians in all their parleys with the English had no other purpose than the exchange of their relatives who were prisoners among the English, *some of them, and even the more important ones*, had let themselves be gained over by the caresses, the fine words and the presents of the English, and acted, I dare say, in concert with them *in the attempt* to establish a solid peace.<sup>52</sup>

A final point: the treaty did not bind until it had been confirmed. It was an Indian custom, commonly observed in later days and probably known at this time, to have the tribes confirm (ratify) whatever treaties their chiefs entered into. It could only have been for the purpose of such a confirmation that a day was appointed for a second meeting between Phips and the Indian chiefs, May 9 and 10, 1694. That was the important day for both French and English as well as Indians. Only after such confirmation would the treaty be valid. The English ignored this point, both then and later.

The Peace of 1693 was the high point of English influence with the Indians in this war. For the French, it constituted a crisis of major import. They rightly regarded the disaffection of the Indians as fatal to themselves, and as soon as they learned of the treaty, they immediately set on foot every means calculated to undo it by preventing confirmation. Events aided them, in that the threatened English expedition against Quebec fell through and the oft-mentioned Iroquois attack on the Abenakis failed to materialize. The remaining causes of the Indians' fears and want the French themselves removed by effectual promises to furnish proper and sufficient supplies and to attack Pemaquid.

The most important instrument for the French was the missionaries. That Father Thury had worked vigorously to prevent the Indians from making the peace was natural. He sought food for the Indians and kept the French officials informed of events in Maine, thereby meriting the favorable comments of

<sup>52</sup> Father Thury to Frontenac, Sept. 11, 1694, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 160.

both Villebon and Frontenac. And at the very time when the Penobscots were making the peace, Villebon wrote: "M. de Thury has given every possible satisfaction. There is nothing that I can leave unsaid to give him a good testimony. He works zealously in everything that pertains to his duty and fulfils it perfectly." The commander added, "There is a Jesuit Father at Kennebec who handles the Indians very well, and as his post is nearest to the English, it is also the one where there is the greatest difficulty (*le plus de peine*)."<sup>53</sup>

After the treaty, Father Thury made a personal visit to Quebec, whence he returned in late September to Pentagoet, "with the intention of arousing disapproval among the *other* Indians of Madockawando's conduct."<sup>54</sup> From then on, he was extremely important in this business.

That very autumn, Frontenac sent to the St. John River a military officer named Villieu, to "collect [for war] those Indians who had not yet entered into the peace and *to persuade the others to break it*."<sup>55</sup> Undoubtedly one of his instructions was to inform the Indians of the coming of supplies for them from France. It is quite certain that another of his instructions was "to keep in close touch with Father Thury and to act in union with him in what affected the good of the King's service."<sup>56</sup>

In this same regard, one can hardly avoid seeing a connection between the political crisis and the change which came about at that same time in the French missionary work among the Kennebec Indians. The Jesuit superiors withdrew Father Bineteau and sent in his place Father V. Bigot, with Father Sebastian Rasle as companion. Of Father Rasle nothing specific is stated, although it may be deduced that he was at Narantuak. In February, 1694, Father Bigot was in Maine in the neighborhood of Amirkankan,<sup>57</sup> on the Androscoggin, where

<sup>53</sup> Webster, *Acadia*, pp. 46, 53. Slightly changed in translation.

<sup>54</sup> Villebon, in Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>55</sup> Frontenac, Oct. 28, 1694, *Coll. Moreau de St.-Méry*, IV, F 147.

<sup>56</sup> *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, II, 220.

<sup>57</sup> Frontenac to the Minister, Oct. 25, 1694, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 164. By May 10 he visited Panawamske, where Father Thury was the missionary. In August,

he established a new mission. There he had "an opportunity," as his brother reported, "of converting a much larger number of persons, and maintaining them in a perfect union with the mission of St. Francis de Sales, which is of great advantage to Canada." Indeed, by October, the Indians of the combined missions had "made three or four attacks on the English; and thus prevented a threatened English attack on Canada."<sup>58</sup>

Evidently the combined efforts of Villieu, the two important chiefs of St. John and Norridgewok, and the missionaries had borne fruit. In fact, at least two weeks before the date set for the confirmation of the 1693 treaty, the Indians of Narantuak and the St. John River were ready to form a large war party.<sup>59</sup>

As Father Thury himself explicitly stated, the purpose of this war party was "to break the measures of the English and of our pro-English Indians to confirm the peace."<sup>60</sup> The attempt was not as yet wholly successful; for when the date of the confirmation of the treaty arrived (May 19-20, 1694), although most of the Indians did not attend, still Madockawando with some of his party, including Edgeremit, did set out to meet Phips at Pemaquid. The Penobscot chief returned on June 5th, with the statement that the Governor of Massachusetts had not yet brought back the Indian prisoners, but that he would do so on July 5th, when there would be a general conference to confirm the peace. This announcement served to delay the final issue; and even that part of the Penobscot tribe which had joined with the Narantuak and the St. John Indians to make war on the English decided to wait and see whether the English were acting in good faith.

Villieu did his best to avert this partial upset to his plans. He depended on two main arguments: first, that the English had been perfidious in not returning the prisoners, and second, that their appointing a general conference to confirm the peace

Father Bigot was at Amesoukanti, *Jesuit Catalogue* (copy in *Jesuit Arch.*, St. Mary's, Montreal); Villieu's *Journal*, in Webster, *Acadia*, pp. 59, 63; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 143.

<sup>58</sup> J. Bigot, letter, Oct. 6, 1694.

<sup>59</sup> Villebon, in notes to Villieu's *Journal*, Webster, *Acadia*, p. 58.

<sup>60</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 160.

probably had a hidden design of removing all the chief Abenakis in one day.<sup>61</sup> His arguments apparently got him nowhere. Even although his first point was well taken, and the English had actually failed in their treaty promise, thus breaking the treaty, the majority of the Penobscots were willing to grant the month's extension for return of the prisoners.

Then events turned in Villieu's favor. On the 8th he first learned the details of the Pemaquid conference, which Madockawando had not given out. The two chiefs had gone aboard Phips' frigate and after a two-hour conference with the English Governor, only one other Indian at most being present, Madockawando threw his hatchet into the sea, and also received some money from Phips for some lands.

Villieu informed Father Thury, and urged him to find Taxous and incite him against Madockawando, by mentioning such grievances "as making peace *without his consent* and selling their lands to the English." This had a wonderful effect. Taxous, as chief, declared loudly that "Madockawando had made peace, but as for himself, he wished to make war." This happened on the 11th.<sup>62</sup> Four days later, a French boat with supplies anchored in the St. John River, and news of that event was quickly brought to Pentagoet. According to one French account, "By what [the boat] brought, the Savages were induced to break their peace with the English."<sup>63</sup> It is a fact indeed that on June 27th another council was held at Pentagoet, in which the vote resulted thus: "all were for war, except thirty of Madockawando's party. And even these joined the next day."<sup>64</sup> This meant of course that the treaty would not be confirmed.

This important change is often attributed to Father Thury,

<sup>61</sup> Villieu, Sept. 7, 1694: cited in Murdoch, *Nova Scotia*, I, 212.

<sup>62</sup> Villieu's *Journal*, in Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 62. Another argument, hinted at in one document, is that Madockawando and some others of the peace party were "in the pay of the English." Frontenac, Oct. 28, 1694, *Coll. Moreau de St-Méry*, 1691-1696, IV, F 147.

<sup>63</sup> Memo. Pesche Sédentaire, 1694, *Am. du Nord, Acadie*, II, 217.

<sup>64</sup> Villieu's *Journal*. If there were 90 Penobscots, the first vote would represent a 60 to 30 majority for the war party in that divided tribe. This means that as a tribe they refused to confirm the peace.



and particularly to his preaching that "faith need not be kept with heretics." Villieu's Journal describes the priest's action in the matter in these words:

M. de Thury [*sic*], their missionary, being sorry to see [the Indians'] enthusiasm cool, took vigorous measures to assure the success of the Sr de Villieu's plans, and was no less troubled than he, on learning that a minister had come to the fort at Pemaquid to teach the Indian children to read and write.<sup>65</sup>

That last note was a very important point. For Phips had brought a Protestant minister to Pemaquid.<sup>66</sup> It was the renewal of the English religious competition with the French for the Indians' alliance.

Father Thury strongly opposed it; but his opposition, beginning as it did on the 8th of June, was evidently not a determining factor of itself. Indeed, a strict following of the chronology points to his words having their effect only after the news of the arrival of the French supplies.

Doubtless Father Thury was asked to speak at the Council, as certainly he had spoken before. What he said there evidently had to do with religion, and there can be no reasonable doubt that it had to do with the minister's being brought to Pemaquid.

The vigorous measures undertaken by him could have included the threat to leave the Indians, and to see that they had no other French missionary after his departure. It is even in the line of possibilities that the priest threatened with excommunication any Indian who would attend the minister's sermons or send his children to the minister's school. But there is absolutely no evidence that he preached to the Indians the doctrine that there was "no need to keep faith with heretics." Practically speaking, that would have been useless. He, as well as other priests, had undoubtedly called the English heretics, but he had been unable to prevent the Indians from mak-

<sup>65</sup> Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>66</sup> The minister in question was probably the Rev. John White, the Governor's personal chaplain. It is known that he was there, and although his stay was but temporary, arrangements were later made for a permanent chaplain at the garrison. The first person to take that post was the Rev. John Pike. *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 18, 1721, 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, IX, 62.

ing the treaty with the English; he had been unable to prevent the first ratification of that treaty by Madockawando.

He *could* have used the argument of "not keeping faith with *perfidious* people." But the evidence shows that it was Villieu who used that argument, and that it had failed. In the last analysis the victorious argument was the arrival of French supplies. There was no meeting with Phips on July 5th, no more attempt to confirm the treaty, and no more exchange of prisoners. That is the story of the "broken treaty" and the part played in it by the priest.

On July 18/28, 1694, the Indians attacked Oyster River (Durham), New Hampshire. Both Father Thury and Father Bigot accompanied their Indians on that expedition, which was of the usual surprise type. New England resented the presence of the priests and emphasized the point that "after victory [they] said Mass twice."<sup>67</sup>

The English, being unprepared, suffered greatly. For this they blamed Phips, because he had assured everybody that the peace with the Indians was real. A great wave of public feeling rose against him; so great, it was said by some, "that if he had not been appointed by the new King, he would have been murdered."<sup>68</sup>

Unanswered ultimatums from the English, unheeded advice from Father Thury, violations of flags of truce by the English, the temporary departure from Penobscot of Father Thury, the permanent departure from Boston of Governor Phips, repeated treachery at Pemaquid by the English, and the final capture of Pemaquid by the French and Indians, stood out in the rest of the war years.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Redford to Phips, July 20, 1694, *Mass. Arch.*, III, 482. First known record of Mass said in New Hampshire, July 18/28. Durham tradition declares that Mass was said in the meeting-house and "undoubtedly saved [this building] from sharing the fate of the other defenceless houses. . . ." J. Finen, "Diocese of Manchester," in *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (Boston, 1899), I, 564. Finen thinks that the Masses were said near Woodman's garrison.

<sup>68</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 160.

<sup>69</sup> Frontenac to Minister, Oct. 28, 1694; *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 12; Hutchinson, *History*, II, 62 n., and ff.; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 613, 614, 641; Webster, *Acadia*, p. 78; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 221; Murdoch, *Nova Scotia*, p. 220; H. Casgrain, *Sulpiciens . . . en Acadie* (Quebec, 1897), p. 192.

As for the priest he was the constant subject of praise from the French officials. In addition to what Villebon had previously reported to the Crown about Father Thury, the same commander, or someone else in authority, writing in the autumn of 1694, added the further recommendations: "He goes on the war parties with the Indians, and he was the principal instrument of their recent rupture [of peace] with the English, which was of such capital importance in the circumstances. He has deprived himself of his own means of subsistence to give the Indians the little he has." That informant took the liberty of suggesting to the Crown that it would perform a deserved and kindly act in suggesting to the Bishop of Quebec that a larger share of the Acadian stipends be given to Father Thury.<sup>70</sup>

The letters written by Frontenac, Villebon, and Villieu to the Court about Father Thury's influence with the Indians and the patriotic use to which he put this influence made a profound impression there. The Court sent more supplies and had them delivered directly to the missionary at Pentagoet, and expressed its hopes that he would continue to handle the Indians with the same application, "never letting them forget His Majesty's affection nor the help he will send them." It also begged the priest to maintain the progress of religion among the Indians by preventing all intercourse with the English.<sup>71</sup>

In 1696 Father Thury began building a new church for his Penobscot Indians, for which he asked, and probably obtained, a subsidy from the French Court. This, the fourth Catholic church in New England, appears to have been located above St. Castin's fort, and to have been blessed by Father Rasle, S.J.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Observations sur les dépêches, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, II, fol. 244.

<sup>71</sup> April 16, 1695, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 174; cf. also Minister to Bishop of Quebec (same date, *ibid.*, 179), in which for the reasons already mentioned, as well as for what the Minister has learned of Thury's poverty, he suggests a larger share of the King's pensions for Acadian priests. Add the testimony found in Tibierge's *Report* of Sept., 1695, in Webster, *Acadia*, pp. 141-143.

<sup>72</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 274 (the correct date is March 6, 1697 — see B 19-2; fol. 156); Maizeret to Gravier, Aug. 1, 1699, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*, S 101, p. 2.

In October, 1697, Father Thury was at Quebec, from which he wrote to the Minister about another new project of his. He evidently described the completion of his church at Pentagoet and the arrival of an assistant there in the person of Father Deschambeaux. Then he spoke of a new project for himself. He had completed his work in Pentagoet. He wished to go to the peninsula of Nova Scotia and establish a like mission for the Indians there.<sup>73</sup> At that time, Father Thury wrote a relation of his old mission: <sup>74</sup>

In this story [he warned], you must not expect to see anything striking, which makes a great noise and by its éclat affects the imagination or rather the curiosity of the world. . . . Everything here has always occurred with a great simplicity and in the obscurity of a great poverty. But I can assure you, the wishes, prayers, services and offerings of these poor savages will be none the less acceptable before God for having been done by people whose name or even nation this world hardly knows.

There is, thanks to God, an extraordinary satisfaction, in seeing all our Indians of the mission of Pentagoet working in their fields; the men and women both lend their hand and also the children. I hope that if that continues, they will put themselves in a position to harvest enough grain for subsisting the better part of the year, and even in the future, the whole year, in the village. This will also mean that they will no longer be under the necessity of dispersing themselves from time to time in the hunting places to obtain the means of livelihood.

The men had much pain in resolving to cultivate their lands, because it was not their custom and because they believed it below them. However, as they had to agree with us that there was no more shame in working than in eating, they finally submitted and get along very well at it.<sup>75</sup>

He went on the Nova Scotia mission and soon died there. A moving eulogy of this splendid missionary is extant in a

<sup>73</sup> Deduced from Minister to Father Thury, March 26, 1698, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 299; *Arch. Col.*, B 20-1, fol. 30.

<sup>74</sup> *Biblioth. St. Sulp.*, Montreal. Copies in *Pub. Arch. Can.* and *Quebec Sem. Arch.*

<sup>75</sup> Father Thury's letter, Jan.-Feb., 1699.



report of his death by the curé of Port Royal in September, 1699. It touches graphically on that last year, as it pictured Father Thury while he traversed the forests, and went up and down the rivers to choose the best place for their settlement, around the church, in a place fit for wheat and at the same time commodious to fishing and hunting, putting his own hand to the wooden plow which he invented, living only on the little fish which came up the river in plenty, his sudden illness, his last penance, and his last request sent to the nearest priest, four days away, to come to say Mass over his grave.<sup>76</sup>

It was by the help of the French missionaries that France had preserved Quebec and regained Acadia from the English. For the Treaty of Ryswick, which wrote an end to the war, recognized that these lands were French.

<sup>76</sup> *Quebec Sem. Arch., Missions*, 89.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-PRIEST LAW (1698-1713)

IN THE TREATY OF RYSWICK, by which the war was settled, September 20, 1697 (known in Boston in December, 1697, but in Canada only in the spring of 1698), England gained a great diplomatic and political victory: her Protestant Revolution and its Protestant royal succession were recognized by France. As to territories, the treaty provided for their general settlement as of 1679. Accordingly, in this section of the world Acadia was returned to the French, and Massachusetts lost that part of what it had received in its new charter. However, as commissioners were to fix the actual boundaries of Acadia, Massachusetts still attempted to influence their decision and to retain the territory at least as far east as the Ste. Croix. After the war, Massachusetts also lost a measure of self-government, for it was united with New York and New Hampshire under the administration of the English-Irish Earl of Bellomont. Massachusetts was not enthusiastic about him, for he was an outsider in residence, a King's man in politics, and an Episcopalian in religion. Nevertheless, Massachusetts found a common interest in his very anti-French and anti-Catholic policy; he was one of the many absentee Irish landlords and vigorous supporters of the extreme Protestant Party in England who, for example, passed the disgraceful English penal law of 1699-1700. As will be seen, he succeeded in having it copied here also.

He arrived in New York on April 2, 1698, and was able to visit New England only a year later. Meanwhile, he kept in touch with New England by letter.

As Governor-General in America, Bellomont's great objective was to secure the English Crown against the dangers of colonial independence and against what were called French encroachments. As for the former, he took every possible occa-

sion to eulogize England. In pursuit of the latter, he naturally faced the Indian problem, viewing it generally from the same angle as had his predecessors Andros, Dongan, and Phips. He claimed jurisdiction over the Iroquois and as many as possible of the Indians of Maine; he sought to drive out the French missionaries who were among them; and he attempted, more eagerly even than Phips, to replace the French priests by English Protestant preachers.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, despite a full year's work on the Indian policy in New York, the Governor had not been able to bring many of the Iroquois around to an exclusion of Jesuits and an acceptance of only Protestant ministers.<sup>2</sup>

During his stay in New York, he also had plans affecting New England. Like his predecessors, he too desired to send New York Iroquois against the New England Abenakis. This plan he fostered from the first, and soon after his arrival in New York he proposed it to the Government of Massachusetts. Massachusetts, however, refused this time to consider the offer for the reason that they "would not use the devil to destroy the devil," a reason which Bellomont dubbed "squeamishness."<sup>3</sup>

He had still another plan, made while in New York, to effect peace in New England with the Eastern Indians. This consisted in using one "Schuyler who was very popular with the Skachkook River Indians."<sup>4</sup> Schuyler would take some of these River Indians with him to the East and try to make a perpetual peace.<sup>5</sup>

## I

During Bellomont's stay in New York, New England had been trying to apply the peace itself. Its policy was like Bello-

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Corr. Gen.*, Canada, 1698, fol. 16; *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 151; XVIII, 403.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 409; *New York Col. Docs.*, IV, 562-565.

<sup>3</sup> To Lords, Sept. 9, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 428.

<sup>4</sup> These Indians, having been driven out of the Eastern parts by the New Englanders, were still acknowledged by the Eastern Indians as part of themselves.

<sup>5</sup> Sept. 21, 1698, *Cal. State Papers*, XVI, 449.

mont's: first, to pretend jurisdiction over the Maine Indians, second, to drive out their Catholic missionaries, and third, to replace these by Protestants.

The Government of Massachusetts refused to admit that the Treaty of Ryswick made any difference in its deep-sea fishing rights or its jurisdiction over the territory and the inhabitants of Maine. Massachusetts even intended, according to a rumor which reached the French in Acadia, to attack the villages of those Maine Indians who were in the French interest and force them to English subjection on the ground that they were rebels. On June 21, 1698, Governor Villebon, of Acadia, wrote to Father Deschambeaux, then at Jemseg (New Brunswick) to have him warn "the Rev. Jesuit Fathers at Kennebec so that they may be on their guard there." He also declared that whatsoever the English pretended, the King of France regarded the Kennebecs as his subjects.<sup>6</sup> He informed the Boston authorities that he had orders from France "to maintain the boundaries between ourselves and New England, that is to say from the Upper Kennebec to its mouth, the course of the river being free to both nations."<sup>7</sup> Massachusetts, obtaining thus no satisfaction of its claims, wrote to London in order that its "ancient boundaries and rights of fishery" might be asserted "against the meeting of the Commissioners of the two Crowns." "We cannot enjoy peace and quiet (it asserted), while the French are so near and persist in their unjust prettexts."<sup>8</sup>

There were two special reasons for Massachusetts' difficulty with the Abenakis, in addition to that with the French. One was that the Indians were not specifically mentioned in the peace treaty, any more than the Iroquois were; the other was that the Abenakis, although war-weary and poor, were nevertheless unwilling to make peace while they still had some accounts to settle (like that with "Pemaquid" Chub, for example, which they took care of at Andover in February, 1698);<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Webster, *Acadia*, p. 114.

<sup>7</sup> Villebon to Stoughton, Sept. 5, 1698, received shortly before Oct. 24; *Cal. State Papers*, XVI, 501.

<sup>8</sup> Oct. 24, 1698, *Cal. State Papers*, XVI, 500.

<sup>9</sup> *Magnalia*, II, 628, 639; Hutchinson, *History*, II, 70-71.



and while three of their fellow Indians were still held captive in Boston.<sup>10</sup>

In their divided opinions, it is not unlikely that their missionaries also took sides. It is certain that Father Vincent Bigot leaned toward the idea of parleys with the English and that there was a difference between him and Father Rasle in sentiments and principles about handling the Indians. Where the exact difference lay or when it showed itself is not known, but it was straightened out for the time being by the Jesuit Superior's withdrawing Father Rasle and leaving Father Jacques Bigot with his brother Father Vincent in Maine. The change itself took place before the autumn of 1699,<sup>11</sup> and it is certain that Father Jacques Bigot went to Maine in the late summer of 1698.

At that very time the Jesuits first took up residence some distance west of the Kennebec. The occasion apparently was as follows. In 1697 a group of pagan Indians moved from English territory to a place within a day's journey of Father Rasle's mission. Through the exhortations of the priest and mutual visits, they became Catholics. There is reason to think that the village which they finally established was the same as the newly founded mission attended by Father Jacques Bigot and his brother Father Vincent in the fall and winter of 1698. It was named Narracomacog and was situated between the head of the Saco (Androscoggin?) and the mission of Amessokanty River.<sup>12</sup>

It was the first winter that missionaries had resided there. It was, furthermore, the nearest residence to the English settlements ever undertaken by the Jesuits. In this place, as well as in Amessokanty, they had chapels, which thus brought to four the number of Catholic (Indian) churches in Maine.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> J. Bigot's *Relation*.

<sup>11</sup> Laval to Tremblay, 1699, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*, N 129.

<sup>12</sup> Romer to Bellomont, Boston, April 11, 1700, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 49; *Relation* of Father Jacques Bigot, Oct. 26, 1699; Thwaites, LXV, 86 ff.; Mather, *Magnalia*, Jan. 14, 1698/99, II, 643.

<sup>13</sup> *Magnalia*, II, 643, Jan. 14, 1698/99; cf. Dudley, Dec. 19, 1703, *Cal. State Papers*, XXI, 880.

Not long after Father Jacques Bigot's arrival in Maine in early September, 1698, formal parleys were opened between the English and the Indians. The first took place on October 14, 1698. And sixty days after that (December 14, 1698), a large conference was held. Both English and French sources for this conference show that the Indians were eager to obtain supplies, and to get back their prisoners, and that having obtained these, they made peace with the English.

The evidence also shows that the English, attempting to have the Indians drive out the Jesuits, had very little success. Although they gained over a few, particularly of the nearest Indians, they made no impression on the others; they even irritated the Indians on the matter of lands by adding to it their persistent religious campaign.<sup>14</sup>

## II

On May 26, 1699, Governor Bellomont arrived in Boston, to begin a fifteen months' campaign for his policies here. A week after arrival, he opened that campaign by a most eulogistic speech about the Protestant King of England, in the course of which he called William III "the glorious instrument of our deliverance from the odious fetters and chains of Popery and Tyranny. . . . There is something Godlike in what the King has done for us." <sup>15</sup>

Coming down to practical legislative suggestions, he touched the Indian question, and recommended the General Court to plan an Indian trade, in which they would undersell the French.<sup>16</sup>

He did not specifically recommend any legislation about the Indians' religion. Nevertheless, it is significant that one of the proposals made in committee on his speech outlined the already well-known religious program. "Suitable means to be used for the timely removeing ye Jesuits from ye Indians in all parts of

<sup>14</sup> *Magnalia*, II, 641; *Mass. Arch.*, 30:1439; Thwaites, LXV, 86 ff.; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 312; *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, Feb. 7, 1698/99, April 12, 1699.

<sup>15</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 7:5; June 2, 1699; *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 164.

<sup>16</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 7:5.

this province & when a convenient time presents, all suitable means may be used to propagate ye Gospell among them.”<sup>17</sup>

This proposal was not then taken up by the General Court. After the first month's residence in Massachusetts, Bellomont went to New Hampshire. There he explicitly brought up his policy about the Indians: there, too, he advanced a step in his anti-Jesuit program. At the first meeting of the Assembly, a bill was introduced for facilitating the conversion of the Indians, and Captain John Hill, commander of the fort at Saco, was ordered to summon the principal Indians to Portsmouth. On August 5th, Captain Hill reported that “All those Eastern Indians carry themselves very insolently and say the English shall not repossess the lands in Maine, except by agreement with them. They have three forts in which are French missionaries.”<sup>18</sup>

The Governor, addressing the Assembly on August 7th, handled the Indian question with pronounced prejudice.

I am very sensible [he said] of the great sufferings you have sustained all this last war by this Province being frontier towards the Eastern Indians — a cruel and perfidious enemy in their own nature, but taught and encouraged to be more so by the Jesuits and other Popish Missionaries from France, who were not more industrious during the war to instigate their Indian disciples and proselytes . . . to kill your people treacherously, than *they have been since the peace, to debauch those Indians from former subjections to the Crown of England*, in so much as at present they [these Indians] seem to have departed from their allegiance to the Crown and revolted to the French.

The New Hampshire Legislature thereupon drew up an address to the King, in which they more than fully reflected the Governor-General's speech. They described the Eastern Indians as “a barbarous and treacherous Enemy, whose bloody nature and perfidy have been much aggravated and improv'd

<sup>17</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 30:444 a. See Act for giving necessary supplies, etc., *Acts and Resolves*, I, 384.

<sup>18</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 380, 386, 391.

of late years by Popish Emissaries from France who have taught 'em that breaking faith with, and murdering us is the Sure way to gain Paradise; . . ."<sup>19</sup>

When some time in November a meeting of about two hundred Indians at Casco Bay "talked high" and asked the Governor's agent (the Governor was not present), "whether the Governor meant to dispose of their lands without their consent," the Governor "in some perplexity," wrote to London: "Nobody doubts but that the French missionaries prompt 'em to this insolence, and how to help it, I cannot tell."<sup>20</sup>

His perplexity would appear much greater from a document which contained "Words the Abenakis purpose addressing to the English upon the arrival of their Governor General who is to visit the Abenakis in the Spring." This document after denying certain English claims to sovereignty over their lands, goes on: "Fourth Word: That the Abenaki is extremely surprised to learn that the Englishman pretends to give him other missionaries than those who now teach them; that the Abenaki will never pray like the Englishman. . . ."<sup>21</sup>

Up to this same time Bellomont also had no success in what he strangely declared seemed to him "the most natural and

<sup>19</sup> *Colls. N.H. Hist. Soc.*, IV, 251, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 55; *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 386, 391. Address ordered Aug. 9, sent down Aug. 14, signed Aug. 15, 1699.

<sup>20</sup> Nov. 22, 27, 1699, *Mass. Council Records*, Nov. 29, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 154.

<sup>21</sup> *Coll. Moreau St.-Méry, Canada*, VI, fol. 142. The document bears no date, but is filed between Sept. 20 and Nov. 8, 1699. At this time, Bellomont extended his anti-Catholic policy to Rhode Island. He went there in October and had an assembly called purposely to repeal a great many of their laws, which, he said, "they are ashamed of, and when they are melted down, so as that they think their body of laws is refined and made fit to bear the test, then I am to have them sent me." (Nov. 6, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 509). It is thought that on this occasion the clause "Roman Catholics only excepted" was introduced into the toleration of Rhode Island. Cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 252. While in Rhode Island, Bellomont met the Jesuit Father Bruyas, who came there either with a Canadian military official or an embassy from Governor Callières, of Quebec. (*Am. du Nord.*, C 11 E 10; *Arch. Col., Canada*, C 11, vol. 17, fol. 24; cf. also *Arch. Col.*, B 22 2, fol. 85; Bellomont to Lords, Feb. 28, 1699-1700, *Cal. State Papers*.) Before leaving Boston, Bellomont had been in contact by letter with another Jesuit, Father V. Bigot, of Naracamecook. This letter to him had to do with some fugitive pirates, but the Governor used every means to keep secret the fact that he corresponded with the Jesuit. *Mag. Am. Hist.*, XIII (1885), 350-351; cf. also Bellomont to Lords, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 487, 680, and 746.



proper way" to solve the Indian problem; that is, by sending "Protestant ministers among 'em." He could find none that would go and live among the Indians and teach them Christianity, despite his offer of one hundred pounds a year. "I could wish the [London] Corporation for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians would encourage some young divines of the Church of England of good sober lives to come over on that account. . . ." <sup>22</sup> He had only succeeded in getting from the Corporation the right to employ five ministers for the work; one of these was to be Mr. Bondet, the other four were to be graduates of Harvard. He sent Mr. Bondet to New Oxford, in the Nipmuck district, and later replaced him with a certain J. Laborie.

### III

Meanwhile, the Commission of the two Crowns had given a temporary solution to the Iroquois question by having the two Governors in question procure a cessation of Iroquois hostilities and see to their being disarmed. Bellomont received the orders in Boston, July 1, 1699, and immediately forwarded a copy of them to Quebec. Out of this came later a strange and important development.

By July 24th, that is, in exactly three weeks, according to Bellomont, a Canada Indian insinuated to an English Indian that the correspondence of the two Governors was designed to ruin the English Indians. Bellomont dubbed this "so foolish an artifice" that "the Governor of Canada could not be its author." Bellomont "rather suspected the Popish missionaries." <sup>23</sup> The design appears again in late January and early February, 1699/1700, in the form of a rumor that all the Indians planned a counter-stroke against the English in the month of April. This rumor was brought by Bellomont to the attention of the Massachusetts Council, which at first paid little re-

<sup>22</sup> Nov. 29, 1699; cf. Lords to Bellomont, Jan. 5, 1698/99; Bellomont to Lords, May 15, 1699, *New York Col. Mss.*, IV, 521; Bellomont to Lords, Nov. 29, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 154.

<sup>23</sup> Aug. 24, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 406.

gard to it. Afterwards, in early March, when new evidence was adduced, the Council became greatly excited, the Legislature was hurriedly assembled, and measures taken to defend the country, to quiet both citizens and Indians, and finally to supplicate God for "the blasting of the evil designs of all that hate Zion." Lieutenant Sabin, of Woodstock, was satisfied that "a great war is intended, not as of old a paganish [one] but a papist war."

It is very important to note here, first, that the supposed insurrection never took place, and secondly, that all the evidence for it and for the existence of the conspiracy itself centred in the Nipmuck country, among the Indians to whom Bellomont had sent Mr. Bondet and then Mr. Laborie as a minister.

Bellomont's argument for its truth was built up thus: The reason given for the conspiracy had made him reflect, he said, on the commands of the two Crowns to the two Governors about disarming the Indians. "I confess I thought it a very unhappy step when I first read His Majesty's letter, and *it then ran in my thoughts* that the French would most certainly improve that part of the King's letter to our disadvantage." He went on to assert that, if he were not pinioned for want of orders, soldiers, and money, he would have arranged a meeting with the Five Nations and given them good presents and especially more arms, etc., than ordinary, to make the report of "our King's disarming 'em *appear a French fiction.*"

I would put one stratagem in practise; I would, by money or extraordinary presents, engage, if it were possible, the Sachems of the Mohawk and Onondage Nations to deliver me up all the Jesuits they have among them, whom I would send prisoners to England, for *without doubt*, they have been tampering to debauch our Indians from their subjection to the King.

According to Bellomont, this would be a perfectly safe and profitable scheme. For, he explained to the Lords, if the Indians could be bribed to hand the Jesuits over to him, they could likewise "be prevailed" upon to give the evidence which

would justify his sending those "Vermin" to England. Furthermore, the Jesuits would no longer trust themselves in Iroquois territory. In any case, the English, being rid of them, could anglicize the Indians without hindrance.<sup>24</sup>

Although he could find no direct evidence about the plot, Bellomont finally presented to the Massachusetts Council the statement that "The French are very industrious to debauch the Five Nations from us, and have got some families to Canada, as if his Majesty had withdrawn his protection from them and designed to extirpate and cutt them off." <sup>25</sup>

It was probably of some influence in the sequel that at almost the same moment the royal engineer, W. Romer, sent to Bellomont his report about the Maine Indians. It described them as having three "forts" at the heads of the Kennebec and Saco (*sic*) Rivers with "two Jesuits in each fort, which do great hurt to the King's interest, and that of the Publick, because they instil into those people an aversion and hatred to his Ma'ty and his subjects." <sup>26</sup>

Then the Governor, having thus kept public opinion stirred up against the Jesuit missionaries, and having had time to receive from England an answer to his letter of February 28th, as well as news about England's new anti-Jesuit law, took his last step to have Massachusetts pass its own anti-priest legislation. Having received the Massachusetts Council's approval, he made his address to the newly opened General Court, and after making a plea for the French Protestants here, and referring to "the present raging persecution of the French Protestants in France," came quickly to the business at hand: <sup>27</sup>

You know as well as I, the Circumstances we are in with the Eastern Indians, that the French Missionaries have debauched 'em from their former Obedience to the King and that it was at their instigation they murdered so many of Your People this Last War, And are now at the Devotion of the Jesuits to

<sup>24</sup> To Lords, Feb. 28, 1699/1700, *New York Col. Docs.*, IV, 606 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Council Records*, 3:120, May 21, 1700; cf. *New York Col. Docs.*, IV, 562, 565, 573, 637, 648, 653.

<sup>26</sup> April 11, 1700, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 49.

<sup>27</sup> *Council Records*, 3:121, May 28; cf. *Cal. State Papers*, April 17, 19, 24.

Act over again Such another Tragedy. It seems to me that the Suffering (of) Jesuits, or other Popish Missionaries to live in this Province and poison the Indians with their gross Idolatry and Superstition, is *Derogatory to English Laws* and Government, and I wish You would this Session without further delay make a Law for Punishing such Jesuits and other Popish Missionaries as shall at any time presume to Come within this Province. . . . The parting with Canada to the French and the Eastern Country called Acadia or Nova Scotia, with the Noble Fishery on that Coast, were a most Execrable Treachery to England, and intended without doubt to Serve the Ends of Popery. Tis too well known what interest that king favoured, that parted with Nova Scotia, and of what Religion he died. I have now in my hands his Original Order to the Governour of Nova Scotia to surrender that Country to the French, and 'tis Observable the Secretary of State that countersigned the Order, afterwards died a Papist. Such fatal misgovernment in the late Reigns ought to give us the highest Veneration and Value for his present Majesty, who is in all Respects a true Protestant King.<sup>28</sup>

On that very day the Massachusetts Council

Resolved that a Bill be drawn up and brought in for the Suppressing and Punishing of Popish Missionaries, Priests or Jesuits that shall be found at any time within any part of this province, And that Wait Winthrop, Elisha Cooke, Samuel Sewall, Esq and the Secretary be a Committee to draw up the said Bill.<sup>29</sup>

On June 11th the bill against Jesuits and Popish priests was ready, and on the 12th, it passed the Council. On June 17th it was passed by the House, and became law.<sup>30</sup>

Whereas divers Jesuits, priests and popish missionaries have of late come, and for some time have had their residence in the remote parts of this province, *and others of his Majesty's territories near adjacent*, who by their subtle insinuations industriously labor to debauch, seduce and withdraw the Indians from their due obedience unto his Majesty, and to excite

<sup>28</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 7:74, May 30.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 7:76.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 7:97.



and stir them up to sedition, rebellions and open hostility against his Majestie's government, for the prevention whereof, be it enacted. . . .<sup>31</sup>

In accordance therewith, no priest could legally be present, as a priest, in Massachusetts territory, after September 10, 1700, under penalty of perpetual imprisonment, and — if he then escaped and was retaken — death.

The Massachusetts law could not apply beyond the St. George's River on the coast and the Kennebec inland. For at that moment, this Government agreed with Canada on these limits. In the summer of 1700, the Governors of Canada and New England sent officers to mark their respective limits. Captain Villieu represented Governor Callières and Captain Cyprian Southack represented Lord Bellomont. Under their auspices the royal arms of France and England were nailed high up on two big fir trees, situated on a point of land that stretched some three leagues into the ocean from the mouth of the St. George's River.<sup>32</sup>

This was a strictly local arrangement, although it was carried out on the instructions of both Home Governments. Both Bellomont and the Canadian officials had had engineers surveying the coast of Maine in the summer of 1699 and others making study of their past history. Bellomont's inquiries led him to tell the Lords, "St. George's, I am sorry to say, is the boundary between us and the French eastward."<sup>33</sup> On the Canadian side Villebon, Governor of Acadie, wrote to the Minister on October 27, 1699, in the same sense: "I can't see how *we* can make any claims beyond St. George's River, unless we wish to strive for the Kennebec. . . ." <sup>34</sup> The French and Eng-

<sup>31</sup> *Acts and Resolves*, I, 423. Printed in Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 326. For this law the Massachusetts Legislature took as their pattern the English "Act for the further preventing the Growth of Popery" (*Statutes at Large* [London, 1763], IV, 41), passed in House of Commons, March 14, 1699/1700, and in Lords, March 18, 1699/1700 (*House Journal*, XIII, 1699-1702, pp. 282 and 287). A detailed comparison of the two laws makes this evident.

<sup>32</sup> The references for this fact are found in Callières to the Minister, Sept. 29, 1700; extract in *Arch. Col.*, C 11 E, vol. II, fol. 158 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, p. 210); Bégon to the Minister, Nov. 8, 1713. *ibid.*, fol. 16 ff. (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, pp. 19-20); see also in vol. I of same, fol. 84 ff. (*Can. Arch.*, 149).

<sup>33</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 412, Aug. 28, 1699.

<sup>34</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 330; Webster, *Acadia*, p. 121.

lish commissioners agreed on this point. This agreement, however, never eventuated into a treaty, for the English commissioners delayed on other matters and no treaty was drawn at that time; afterwards, the matter was settled by war. The agreement, nevertheless, was probably made known to both the Governors in America and led to the ceremony mentioned above. Bellomont may well have been apprized of it before July 15, 1700, when he wrote to the Lords:

If the King will please to order me to build a good fort at Ste. Croix, I will quickly obey his commands. The French Jesuits, it seems, are resolved not to stay for a determination of bounds [by the two Crowns?], they having built a great church at Norridgewok. . . . If I had my will, I would soon root them out of that place and all other places on this side of the River Ste. Croix. . . .

In any case the Massachusetts anti-priest law would, in those conditions, affect only the two Indian chapels at Roccamego and Amessokanti; it could not justly touch those of Norridgewok and Pentagoet.

The anti-priest law had been the chief product of Bellomont's anti-French and anti-Catholic Indian policy.<sup>35</sup> Other means to help solve the Indian problem had also been suggested, one having to do with Protestant missionaries to the Indians, another with Indian lands. These latter included a memorable suggestion by the celebrated Mr. Sewall. This gentleman was at the time Secretary of the Corporation for Evangelizing the Indians, and reported to their president in England:

Peace with the Indians upon firm and sure foundations . . . cannot well be, while our Articles of Accord with them remain so very general as they doe. I should think it requisite that convenient tracts of land should be set out to them, and that by plain and natural boundaries . . . upon which for any

<sup>35</sup> On July 17, Bellomont left Boston for New York, where he arrived on July 24. He was able, in a week, to put through the Legislature there an anti-Jesuit law almost identical in wording with that of Massachusetts. An Act against Jesuits and Popish priests, July 31, 1700, Sixth Assembly, Second Session, *Laws of State of New York from 1691 to 1773*, I (New York, 1774), 36-38.

Englishman to encroach should be accounted a Crime. Except this be done, I fear their own Jealousies and the French Friars will persuade them that the English, as they increase, and think they want more room, will never leave till they have crowded them quite out of all their lands. And it will be a vain attempt for us to offer Heaven to them if they take up prejudices against us, as if we did grudge them a living out of their own earth.<sup>36</sup>

Sewall's point was obvious and well-grounded. Bellomont himself had received

a multitude of petitions from the poor Indians of this Province, complaining of their being unjustly deprived of their lands. I give 'em a hearing but am not able to relieve 'em, for should I apply to the Council or House of Representatives in their behalf, they are parties either for themselves or their friends, and 'tis a great scandal to our religion and nation that justice is not done to these poor creatures.<sup>37</sup>

The Legislature, however, had passed an act which did represent another part of Bellomont's program. "In order to settle the Eastern Indians in obedience to his Majesty," it resolved:

That it is highly necessary speedily to procure and send three able Learned Orthodox Ministers to have their Residence among the said Indians and the Indians on Merrimack River at such places as the Governor shall think fit to appoint, to Instruct them in the true Christian Religion;

That the said Ministers be allowed and paid the Sum of One Hundred and Twenty pounds p. annum each; . . .

That they be strictly prohibited from trading with the Indians or receiving anything from them more than for their present accommodation;

And that they be advised to invite them to embrace the true

<sup>36</sup> May 3, 1700, *Letter-Book*, I, 281.

<sup>37</sup> Oct. 24, 1699, *Cal. State Papers*, XVII, 487; XVIII, 164. In the May session of 1700, he also found similar petitions from the Indians who, he said, "I think are barbariously treated in many parts of [Massachusetts] Province, but little was done for their relief. The Act passed for Preventing abuses to the Indians has a spacious name, but the House . . . left out the most useful clause in it." *Cal. State Papers*, XVIII, 672.

Christian Religion, by extending charity to them from time to time as Occasion may present.

The Legislature also ordered

That the Hon'ble Gentlemen Agents of the Corporation for Propagating the Gospel amongst the Indians be applyed unto, to pay the said salaries, and even increase them, and that the neighboring colonies also be asked for aid in carrying on so necessary and pious a work.<sup>38</sup>

In fulfillment of this government measure, two ministers were sent to Maine. On September 5, 1700, Mr. Jonathan Remington was sent "to his Majesty's fort at Saco as chaplain of the Garrison and to instruct the Indians."<sup>39</sup> Before December 20, 1700, Mr. John White appears in like capacity at Casco Bay.<sup>40</sup> Other minister chaplains followed them.<sup>41</sup>

This Massachusetts-New York plan was one of the factors that brought about King William's foundation (1701) of the famous English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, modeled upon the Roman Congregation de Propaganda Fide.<sup>42</sup>

#### IV

Knowledge of the new Massachusetts law against priests did not immediately cause the Jesuits' withdrawal. On September 24, 1700, Father Bigot was still at Amessokanti, whence he dated a letter to a certain George Turfrey, of Saco Fort. In the awkward contemporaneous translation, it said:

I did and do still very much wonder at what I lately heard [from] a certain Indian, viz. that the Earl of Bellomont earnestly desires to get us into his hands; so as to hire the Indians themselves with a great reward that they would effect it; and that he gives out that if he once take me, that I shall not go

<sup>38</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 30:461; printed in *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 29.

<sup>39</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Sept. 5, 1700; *Cal. State Papers*, XVIII, 517.

<sup>40</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Dec. 20, 1700; cf. also *Baxter Mss.*, X, 85.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Samuel Moody, Samuel Hunt, and Jeremiah Wise, in *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, IV (Harvard Univ. Press, 1933), index.

<sup>42</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XVIII, 506, 523, 547, 621; *New York Col. Docs.*, IV, 774; W. Perry, *Digest of S. P. G. Records* (London, 1893), p. 925.



away Scot-free, but that he will thrust us into a most loathsome Prison . . . that he will keep us there at his pleasure for the space of six whole years and then take order for our transportation to England. But when a certain Indian, that heard this, replied that the Earl of Bellomont went about a business that was odious both to the Indians as well as to the French, [the other] added that the Earl of Bellomont indeed desired the Friendship of the Indians but was not very thoughtful about the French, whether they were friends or foes. . . .

Father Bigot then went on with certain reflections about the priests' not deserving this measure. He recalled having saved many English from death and having taken some to the homes of French people. He mentioned his care for others

to do them good, helping them with my small estate, comforting them, getting some supings [*sic*] for the sick, assuaging their misery and easing their mind one way or other. This they themselves will not disown, that there was no duty of ours lacking to them. . . .

He then expressed

the hope that hereafter I and the Earl of Bellomont shall have the same judge, who will give unto every one according to his works. . . . Happy were we, if that only befell us which befell our brethren [in England], who it is certain only upon account of Religion that was hateful to you, were hanged and slain with all manner of punishments.

The priest's charges against the English and French anti-Catholics of the past and his picture of the great English Jesuit, Father Parsons, are also well worth reading.<sup>43</sup>

It is probable that Father Bigot stayed among the Kennebecs until at least April 10, 1701, for on that day Lieutenant-Governor Stoughton answered his letter to Turfrey of the previous year with a courteous but pointed rejoinder:

We are very thankful to you for the relief you have afforded ours in their distress. Some of yours have experienced the like

<sup>43</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, V, 455, dated incorrectly: should be 1700; cf. *Minutes, Mass. Council, Cal. State Papers*, XVIII, 538.

succor from us. And we are ready to grant it still to any of yours and to yourself in particular. And you will account it friendship that we call upon you not to run upon the sword's point but to learn of St. Paul in keeping within your bounds and not going beyond your line, which extends not to our Indians. . . . Imitate your countryman the Protean Parsons . . . by speedily betaking yourself to Quebec or Paris or Rome or where you please out of this jurisdiction, except you can find in your heart to forego your superstition — and embrace the true Reformed religion, which most firmly retains everything that is Christian in yours.<sup>44</sup>

It is probable that the priest stayed for the conference which the Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts arranged for in June, 1701. At this conference the Indians rejected Massachusetts' offer to send them Protestant ministers,<sup>45</sup> but otherwise made peace with the Boston Government. On December 6th, Father Bigot was blamed by the French Governor of Acadia, for not taking any manifest care to prevent the Kennebecs from having the conference and making the peace;<sup>46</sup> and on December 30th, he was again blamed by the same governor, who this time added a similar charge against Father Gaulin, missionary at Penobscot. "I could not have thought that the Missionaries, who are good and honorable persons could have become English, as their conduct now clearly indicates."<sup>47</sup>

Whether these complaints were the cause or not, it was known in France by March 8, 1702, that the Jesuit Superior informed the Bishop of Quebec that Father Bigot was withdrawn from the Maine mission, and that there was no longer any missionary on the Kennebec. The Court then directed the Bishop to send one there immediately. The result was Father Rasle's return to the Kennebec.<sup>48</sup>

Father Anthony Gaulin, the missionary of Penobscot of whom Brouillan spoke, had come to the Penobscot mission to assist Father Deschambeaux. A Canadian by birth, he had been

<sup>44</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 109. <sup>45</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 30:464 to 471.

<sup>46</sup> *Arch. Col.*, C 11, *Acadie*, IV, fol. 56, Oct. 6, 1701. <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 30, 1701.

<sup>48</sup> *Arch. Col.*, B 23 1, fol. 21 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, p. 77); B 23 2, fol. 135 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, p. 400).

ordained at the Seminary of Quebec on December 21, 1697, at twenty-three years of age, and had set out at once with Father Thury for Pentagoet. He was not there long when he was put in charge.<sup>49</sup> Father Gaulin was then given as helper a seminarian named Philip Rageot, because no priest was available.<sup>50</sup> In his new post the Seminary priest continued the friendly relations with the Jesuits that had existed in the days of Fathers Thury and Deschambeaux. All these priests visited one another frequently, helped one another on every occasion, and lived on terms of utmost harmony.<sup>51</sup>

The work of all these missionaries among the Indians was difficult indeed, but it was doubled by what the priests had to suffer from the French Government officials in Acadia, as well as from the officials of the Fishery Company, whom these politicians deceived. Complaint after complaint was sent to Paris against the missionaries, including the as yet unordained Rageot (as well as against M. de St.-Castin), charging disloyalty to France and friendship for the English. Villieu even boasted that he would drive Father Gaulin from his mission at Penobscot<sup>52</sup> in somewhat the fashion evidently employed by his successor to get Father Bigot changed from the Kennebec.

By the middle of 1700, Father Gaulin, having learned of the charges, wrote a reply so clear and so strong as to deserve quotation. Taking up Villieu's charge that the missionaries were not doing their duty, he said:

I wish he had set down exactly what *is* their duty. Doubtless, first of all would be their allowing the Company to sell liquor to the Indians and cheat them right and left; for unless a missionary allows all that and much else that would be too long to report here, he will never be an honest man in the eyes of

<sup>49</sup> Deschambeaux was sent to the newly erected parish of Minas, Acadia, where he died Aug. 29, 1698.

<sup>50</sup> *Histoire du Séminaire des Missions Etrangères de Quebec* (mss. in *Quebec Sem. Arch.*), pp. 986 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Father Maizerets to Father Gravier, Aug. 1, 1699, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*, Letters S 101, p. 2; Laval to Tremblay, 1699, and to Lamberville, Nov. 8, 1700, *Quebec Sem. Arch.*

<sup>52</sup> Villieu to the Minister, Oct. 22, 1700, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, IV, fol. 24; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 336; Minister to Villieu, March 30, 1701, *Arch. Col.*, B 22, 3, fol. 164.

these gentlemen. In fact, let him but set himself against their thefts and robberies, and at once there must be an order to get him dismissed from his mission.

Certainly the fact that the Company's ship carries my belongings will not prevent my doing my duty, and will not compel me to let the wolf enter the sheepfold, and cause disorder in my mission; even if it was the King who wished this, I would resist him at the peril of my life.

He then explained what took place between M. de Villieu and the Indians of this mission. Villieu had come to trade. The priest asked him not to sell liquor, but Villieu tried to do so, and the priest used his influence to have him refused all trading rights by the Indians.

So goes this defense of a missionary, all of which ought to be read and meditated on.<sup>53</sup> Fathers Gaulin and Rageot traded with New England in a small way for their own supplies. Two letters of the spring of 1703 show that the two priests on the one side and Lieutenant-Governor Partridge, of New Hampshire, and Captain Penhallow on the other side exchanged furs for bread and other food (pork).<sup>54</sup> Such trading was done in connection with that which the Indians and the Massachusetts Government mutually carried on, and it was known to Governor Dudley, if not fostered by him.

## V

On March 8, 1702, King William died. Less than three months afterwards (May 4, O.S.) England joined the European war against France, which Austria had begun in 1701. It is called the War of the Spanish Succession, or in English-speaking countries, Queen Anne's War, after the English Queen who followed William on the throne. In this country, the war itself had been both expected and prepared for, the year previous. Just as Massachusetts had been preparing by its treaty with the

<sup>53</sup> Father Gaulin to Tremblay, Oct. 24, 1701, in Casgrain, *Sulpiciens*, pp. 234 ff.; cf. *Arch. Col.*, B 22, 3, fol. 164.

<sup>54</sup> Partridge to Penhallow, April 8, 1703; Father Rageot to Penhallow, June 28, 1703, in *Belknap Papers*, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*



Indians, so the new French Governor of Acadie had tried to protect his interests. Being quite unable to resist New England's arms, he proposed a treaty of neutrality to its Government, but was answered that such a matter must await the arrival in Boston of Dudley, the newly appointed Governor of this province.<sup>55</sup> Needless to say, the Acadian offer was finally rejected. Massachusetts intended to recover in the new war what it had lost in the last peace, and more if possible. The French appeared almost resigned to sacrifice Port Royal and defend themselves on the St. Lawrence.

As regards the Indians, the English policy was to secure the Abenakis' neutrality. The French on the other hand felt themselves obliged to embroil the Abenakis with the English, as an aid to defending Quebec. In the negotiations on both sides entered Catholic priests and Protestant ministers.

The new Massachusetts Governor, Dudley, had hardly arrived in Massachusetts when he learned (June 20, 1702) that war between France and England had been proclaimed. Among the steps which he took to meet the emergency was the arrangement for a conference with the Maine Indians, whom he was able to meet on July 27th on Arrowsick Island at the mouth of the Kennebec.<sup>56</sup>

The evidences from various sources plainly indicate that Massachusetts sought from the Indians an absolute neutrality and offered them Protestant ministers; and that the Indians agreed to a conditional neutrality, but refused to accept the Protestant ministers. The condition which they put on their neutrality was that the English should not attack the French.<sup>57 58</sup>

Some time in late August, the Indians ratified what they had agreed on with Massachusetts. The fact, but not its proper conditions, was reported by Major March, of Casco Fort, on

<sup>55</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XX, Preface, and nos. 129, 218, 264.

<sup>56</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XX, 502; 519; *Mass. Council Records*, Aug. 3, 13, 1702.

<sup>57</sup> Aug. 5, 1702, *Cal. State Papers*, XX, 501, 592. Father Rasle, who had returned to Maine, was also present at the conference. Father Rasle's letter of Oct. 13, 1723.

<sup>58</sup> *Arch. Col.*, F 3, 2, pt. 2, *Coll. Moreau de St. Méry*, F 176 A: *Canada, Corr. Gen.*, C 11, vol. XX, fol. 155; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 737.

August 27, 1702.<sup>59</sup> The frightened and incorrect view of the event taken by Governor Brouillan, of Acadia, is reflected in an express which he sent to his Home Government on January 1, 1703. In this he reported that the Kennebec Indians had made a treaty of neutrality with the English and that there was now much reason to fear lest the Kennebecs should allow the English a free passage over their lands in any campaign against the French establishments, among others against that of St.-Castin. He also stated that this treaty was made by the intervention of Father Ralle, a Jesuit, their missionary.

When the French Minister received this letter, he went into action at once. On May 23rd he ordered St.-Castin, then in France, to return immediately to America. On May 30th he wrote to the Superior of the Jesuits in France, and after reporting about the Indian treaty and its embarrassing consequences for the French, he went on to say,

I was very much surprised to learn that one of your fathers was mixed up in such a business, and I believe that you will judge it proper to withdraw him from there and send there some one who knows better how to manage the interests of religion and those of the King, which are in fact inseparable. In this case, for example, it is certain that if the English chase the French out of that country, the Catholic religion will not remain there long.<sup>60</sup>

On June 6, 1703, he finally wrote to Brouillan discounting the Kennebecs' neutrality, especially if it contributed to a like neutrality by the Iroquois. Nevertheless, he added, "His Majesty considered it wrong [*mauvais*] that their missionaries interfered on the side of this neutrality; and I have written in his name to Father De la Chaize to have Father Ralle [*sic*] recalled [retired] and to send another [priest] in his place."<sup>61</sup>

No Indian war had as yet taken place. The Kennebec and Penobscot Indians had resisted the efforts which the English had made to keep them neutral and the French officials had

<sup>59</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XX, 570, Aug. 27, 1702; *New York Col. Docs.*, LX, 756.

<sup>60</sup> *Arch. Marine*, B 2-168, fol. 501 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*, pp. 118, 145).

<sup>61</sup> B 23-3, fol. 244 (*Can. Arch.*, p. 221).

made to embroil them. The Indians' view was "no war, except for the defense of Quebec or Port Royal." Strangely enough, the Indians' attitude in this matter was attributed by the French to the Jesuit missionaries of Maine, two of whom had been complained of (and removed?) on this account.

This kind of Abenaki neutrality pleased neither the Canadian nor the New England officials, as each Government was preparing to attack the territory of the other. In the spring of 1703, Dudley was contemplating an attack on Port Royal,<sup>62</sup> which he had told the General Court in his very first speech could be captured by two warships and a thousand men.<sup>63</sup> At the same time in Canada, M. de Vaudreuil, who had succeeded to the Government there on the death (May 26, 1703) of Governor Callières, and who knew of the English intention to attack Port Royal, planned to counter that in advance by inciting the Cape Sable Micmacs to attack Boston.<sup>64</sup>

Although war was inevitable, it was actually brought about by a foolish act of some individual Englishmen who plundered St.-Castin's establishment. Their unjustifiable piracy gave occasion for Abenakis' reprisal and in the end brought about Queen Anne's War, just as the similar unprovoked robbery of St.-Castin fifteen years earlier had occasioned King William's War.<sup>65</sup> Governor Dudley, recognizing the danger created by the injury, did everything in his power to prevent the Penobscots' further reprisals, but apparently his action was not taken soon enough to prevent that injury's being used by the Canadian Governor for his own purpose. He, too, had heard of the Penobscots' resentment, and attempted to add some Maine Abenakis to the war party which he was already preparing among the Micmacs. He was successful, it appears, only with some Pegwackets and Pennacooks. The Kennebecs as a whole did not join.

On August 10th the Indians attacked the coast settlements

<sup>62</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXI, 200, 500.

<sup>63</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 34.

<sup>64</sup> Ramesay to Minister, Nov. 14, 1704, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11, vol. 22, fol. 71.

<sup>65</sup> Williamson, 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VI, 112; cf. Belknap, *Hist. of New Hampshire*, 135; Hutchinson, *History*, II, 103; Southack to Dudley, 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, III, 344-347.

from Casco to Wells and "committed many grievous outrages and massacres upon the poor people. They killed 73 and captured 95. . . . This was their first act of hostility . . . after five years' peace." <sup>66</sup> According to Dudley, "The Fryars (who accompanied them) make it all religion and say Mass over everything publicly in the camp night and morning." <sup>67</sup> The Cape Sable Indians (Micmacs) were accompanied by Father Gaulin, who was missionary to their tribe; the St. John Indians were accompanied by Father Aubery, S.J., their missionary.<sup>68</sup> Father Rasle did not go with those of his group who joined the other tribes; but he did give them the advice "to be as attached to their religion as they were in the village, to observe carefully the laws of war, not to exercise any cruelty, not to kill anybody in the heat of combat, to treat humanely those who gave themselves up as prisoners, etc." <sup>69</sup>

A close examination of the evidence indicates that Father Rasle was not at all in favor of the whole idea. He clearly saw the risks it involved: first, that of losing the Abenakis, who, in dire need of supplies, might finally go over to the English and thus eventually be drawn to aid the English in the war, and, second, that of driving the Iroquois into warfare against the French. He, therefore, advised either a return to neutrality or a withdrawal of the Abenakis to Canada, despite the ultimate exposure of Acadia to English attack.

This advice Fathers Gaulin and Aubery gave to the French Governor on their return from that campaign. The latter then planned to establish the Abenakis near Chambly, where they would cover Quebec and Montreal from an attack on that side. As for Port Royal, he asserted that these Abenakis were not in a position to aid it.<sup>70</sup> Thereupon

their fathers and the Indians met together at Norridgewock and told the Indians that they must look out for some other

<sup>66</sup> *Journal of John Pike, Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XIV, 135.

<sup>67</sup> To Lords, Sept. 15, 1703, *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 151.

<sup>68</sup> Beauharnois and Vaudreuil to the Minister, Nov. 15, 1703.

<sup>69</sup> Letter to his brother, in J. Baxter, *Pioneers of New France in New England* (Albany, 1894), p. 219.

<sup>70</sup> Vaudreuil to the Minister, Nov. 15, 1703. What is said above about Father Rasle's view is a deduction.



country, for that it was impossible for them to live there. Whereupon they all agreed to go away, which they did and left their rough household stuff and corn behind them and went . . . to Canada.<sup>71</sup>

This emigration, beginning with the Pegwackets, had started before October 26, 1703.<sup>72</sup> It included the Amessokantis and the Narantuaks, and by the autumn of 1704, the Penobscots also. The last-named went to Pointe à la Caille, near Quebec, the others in general to St. Francis and Bécancourt, but some went first to a place up the Connecticut River called Kowasuck (Coos?).<sup>73</sup>

## VI

As a result of the Indians' departure, Massachusetts troops were enabled during the war to destroy their villages. Pegwacket Fort suffered this fate on February 16, 1704/05. The English soldiers found it, "a large place of about an acre of ground, with timber set in the ground in a circular form with Posts, and about 100 wigwams therein." They said nothing about the chapel, which it is known was there.<sup>74</sup>

The story of the destruction of Narantuck (Norridgewok) is found in the *Boston News-Letter*, March 5th to 12th: <sup>75</sup>

Piscataqua, March 8th

Our forces under the Command of Lieut. Col. Hilton and Major Walton returned last night from Narigwalk, the headquarters of the Eastern Indians, who advise of a large Fort, Meeting-house and School-house that were there erected, the Fort encompassed 3 quarters of an acre of ground built with

<sup>71</sup> T. Church, *History of King Philip's War* (ed. by S. G. Drake, 2nd ed.: Boston, 1827), p. 283.

<sup>72</sup> *Journal of John Pike*.

<sup>73</sup> An expedition against this lastnamed place was undertaken from Northampton in June, 1704. (Penhallow, 31 ff.; cf. *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 411 and 414, May 12, 1704, and June 13, 1704.) Some of the Indians evidently returned to their villages for planting in that summer.

<sup>74</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXII, 66; *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 140; Dudley to Lords, March 3, 1704.

<sup>75</sup> Harvard Coll. Library, Treasure Room.

Pallisados; wherein were 12 Wigwams but no Enemy; neither the discovery of any Tracks seen, but of 3 or 4 supposed to be there about 3 weeks since, no plunder excepting a few Household Utensils of little value. The Meeting-house was built of Timber 60 Foot long, 25 Foot wide, and 18 Foot studd ceiled with Clapboards; in it were only a few old Popish Relicks; the School-house lay at one end distinct, all which they burnt.

New England's long-prepared attack upon Port Royal was carried out in the spring of 1704.<sup>76</sup> In the whole expedition, which lasted from May 15th until July 4th, the English visited all the places on the eastern shore from Penobscot through Passamaquoddy and Mount Desert, killing and seizing captives; and then proceeded to Minas. There they burnt most of the houses and took prisoners and plunder, as well as razing the dams and the fortifications. They also took away the ornaments of the church. They did not touch Port Royal on that occasion.<sup>77</sup>

Their success also gave them the means of exchanging the New England prisoners still held by Governor Vaudreuil, of whom Governor Dudley wrote:

I would be glad to get the poor women and children home . . . their friends are very impatient. . . . The Priests use all possible methods to debauch their religion and many of them are already gone over and entered into their Nunnerys, and others married amongst them. . . .<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup> It was not unnatural in the stress of the war that the following legislation was introduced and passed in April, 1704:

Memorial.

"It seems Convenient, if not Necessary, that by an Order of this court all the French-men residing in this Province be registered, and they not under such a Regulation: That if at any time after, they be convicted of holding Correspondence with the French & Indian Enemy, they may without dispute, be proceeded with as Englishmen should be under the like Circumstances. And that all French Roman Catholics be forthwith made Prisoners of War, and the Government of Connecticut and Rhode Island and New Hampshire be desired to use the same Precaution." (*Mass. Arch.*, 15 A:14; passed April 20, 1704.) New Hampshire passed the same Act on April 29, 1704. (*New Hampshire Prov. Papers*, II, 429.)

<sup>77</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXII, 273, 325; *New Hampshire Hist. Soc. Colls.*, 1; *Arch. Col.*, B 27-2, fol. 159; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 419.

<sup>78</sup> Dudley to Council of Trade, Feb. 1, 1706, *Cal. State Papers*, XXIII, 30.

New England kept its eye, not only on Port Royal, but also on Quebec, and their future as English territory. In this regard, Dudley advised the establishment in those parts of a Scotch colony of five thousand men, "which would, with the assistance of these Provinces, very easily remove the French and put an end to the troubles upon the whole shore of America, and they would therefore be very acceptable here."<sup>79</sup>

Within six months he wished "to destroy the French settlements [of L'Acadie] and make room for a colony of North Brittons if H.M. shall so please, which will be much more worth than anything in Scotland."<sup>80</sup>

Perhaps this project of Protestant immigration had been suggested by the ideas of Thomas Dongan, ex-Governor of New York, who had formerly fostered the plan of Irish Catholic emigration to the lands of the Duke of York in Maine, and who had just recently renewed it. In 1698, he had become Earl of Limerick, and, believing probably that he had little chance then of gaining his ancestral estate, presented a petition to the Crown on April 2, 1700, for an estate in America.<sup>81 82</sup> The petition was not granted at that time, for the Earl evidently renewed it after the King's death, and again without success.<sup>83</sup>

In this connection, it may be noted that there already had been question of Irish Catholics in Massachusetts. On October 27, 1699, Governor Villebon, of Acadia, had proposed his Government's obtaining an Irish priest from Ireland to serve as chaplain at the fort in St. John River, and to attract thither "the Irish Catholics who are at Boston. These latter, not being well-treated there, would decide to come to us much more easily if they knew that we had a priest of their nationality."<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Dudley to Council of Trade, Oct. 2, 1706, *ibid.*, 233.

<sup>80</sup> May 26, 1707, *Cal. State Papers*, XXIII, 438.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 208, 214. <sup>82</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 98-1700.

<sup>83</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XIX, 81; and XXII, 52; cf. Donovan, *Pre-Revolutionary Irish in Massachusetts, 1620-1775* (St. Louis, 1931), p. 20. Citation shows that the case was brought to the Crown in 1704, on the point "whether a Roman Catholic is capable of a Grant of lands in the Plantations, giving the statute of II William for further preventing the growth of Popery." One Edward Northey answered the query in the affirmative, holding that the statute did not apply to the Plantations. July 2, 1704.

<sup>84</sup> Villebon to Minister, Oct. 27, 1699, C 11, *Acadie*, vol. 3, fol. 215; cf. Webster, *Acadia*, p. 210.

The most striking events of the late years of the war were the English preparations for an expedition against Quebec and Montreal and the successful expedition to Nova Scotia.<sup>85</sup>

Port Royal capitulated on October 12, 1710. One of the articles was destined to prove troublesome — that the inhabitants within gunshot of the fort were to be allowed two years to decide whether they would leave or take the oath of allegiance. The rest were left prisoners at discretion. The council of war recommended to the Lords that all the French inhabitants who would not adopt the Protestant religion should be transported without delay and that a settlement of British Protestants be sent over to develop the fishery and naval stores.<sup>86</sup>

As part of the campaign to keep the conquest, the English Governor of Port Royal in January, 1711, arrested the pastor, the Recollet Father Justinian Durand, while he was celebrating Holy Mass, and sent him to Boston with five of the inhabitants, as prisoners of war.<sup>87</sup> The priest was left as prisoner to Massachusetts as a probable exchange for Mr. Williams' daughter,<sup>88</sup> and was back in Nova Scotia by December 20, 1711. It is very agreeable to set down the fact that while a prisoner here, on July 4, 1711, Father Justinian was invited to attend the Harvard Commencement and sat with the Fellows.<sup>89</sup>

New England's plan to conquer Quebec went awry, but the war ended with the English in control of the strategic points of the whole coast of Maine and parts of Nova Scotia, including Port Royal. New England had apparently gained all that it sought when the war began: it could hope henceforth to dominate the Indians of Maine, to anglicize them, and to take over their lands for further English exploitation.

<sup>85</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXV, *passim*.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, XXV, 246.

<sup>87</sup> Des Goutin to the Minister, Nov. 17, 1711; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 547.

<sup>88</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 5:365; April 2, 1711; cf. *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 539; Sewall, *Diary*, for Feb. 26, 1710/11.

<sup>89</sup> Sewall, *Diary*, II, 318.



## CHAPTER VI

### FATHER RASLE AND THE CATHOLIC INDIANS AFTER THE PEACE OF UTRECHT (1713-1724)

THE NEWS of a cessation of arms was published in Boston on October 27, O.S. (November 7, N.S.), 1712. Besides peace, it brought also assurance of victory. Of particular interest to Massachusetts was the intimation that France would cede to England the territory of Nova Scotia, or Acadia.

Thereupon, Massachusetts, claiming that Acadia included northern Maine and New Brunswick, as well as the peninsula, considered itself restored to its charter limits. In consequence, it attempted to colonize the lands in Maine, and thus it came into conflict again with the Indians there. Thus also, it came to the tragic killing of Father Rasle, the missionary of these Indians.

In laying claim to the lands beyond the Kennebec, Massachusetts acted upon grounds that were far from certain. The Treaty of Utrecht itself did not definitely settle the status of Maine and New Brunswick. For in their regard, it employed expressions which were, to say the least, indefinite. The particular article of the treaty on which the English claim was based read, "all Nova Scotia or Acadia, *according to its ancient limits*, as well as the city of Port Royal, now called Annapolis Royal, and generally all that depends on the said lands and islands of that country."

In negotiating the treaty, the English plenipotentiaries had sought in vain to get Maine and New Brunswick, as well as the peninsula. They compromised on the words given above and left the determination of the boundary, as well as other moot points to be settled by a commission.

In early 1714, negotiations to set up the commission were initiated by the English, but the death of their Queen and the

subsequent change of government in France left this matter in abeyance. In January, 1717, an alliance was entered into by the two Crowns to uphold the peace, and the settlement of the limits of Acadia was resumed only in 1719, when again it came to nothing.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, Massachusetts acted as if there were no question on this point, and as if northern Maine were definitely English. One's judgment about the events which succeeded the Treaty of Utrecht will therefore depend, in large measure, on which of the two interpretations he favors. According to the French view, the land east of the Kennebec River, where Father Rasle was killed, was not English territory, much less Massachusetts territory. In any case, its status had not been determined. Again, according to the same French view, any attempt by the English to settle on land east of the Kennebec River was an act of aggression.

As for the Indians, they claimed that the territory in dispute was neither French nor English, but Indian, and they continued to act as sovereigns, despite the Treaty of Utrecht. The story of these years is that of the Massachusetts Government's attempt to gain or to force their subjection.

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Aff. Etrang., Corr. Pol., Angleterre*, vols. 262 and 324.

*Note.* It should be clearly understood that there were three uses of the name Acadie, one more ancient than the other. According to the first, Acadie embraced only the southeastern part of the peninsula. According to the second, it embraced the whole peninsula. According to the third, it embraced part of the mainland also. The first known extension of the name Acadie to include part of the mainland occurred after the year 1647. In that year a French governor was appointed to rule not only Acadie, but also its confines, which embraced the coast of Maine and New Brunswick. Henceforth the name Acadie began to be used for all the territory, then included in his scope of government. This usage was often employed even by Canadian officials themselves.

Before the year 1647, the coast of Maine and New Brunswick was entirely distinct from Acadie, and was called Norumbega and the Côte des Etchemins. This was the terminology employed by Champlain, *Voyages*, Lescarbot, *Histoire*, and Denis, *Amérique Septentrionale*, without exception. Indeed these writers spoke of Acadie as embracing only the southeastern part of the peninsula, and not even Port Royal. (*Mémoire des Commissaires* [Amsterdam, Leipsic, 1755]. See also an excellent memoir, *Arch. Aff. Etrang., Corr. Pol., Angleterre*, vol. 334, pp. 33 to 52, dated January 1, 1720.)

One particular point which the French rejected in the English claim referred to "the territories which *depend* on the said country." The French declared that the English distorted this to mean "the territories which are *adjacent* to the said country." (*Mémoire des Commissaires*, I, 198.)

## I

The treaty did, however, accomplish one result immediately. It prevented Massachusetts from extending its anti-Catholic policy to the Maine Indians. At the time of the cessation of arms, this Government desired the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries from Maine. On December 2, 1712, Governor Dudley wrote to the Lords of Trade, summing up Massachusetts' policy for the disputed territory: establishment there of English settlements and removal of Catholic priests. And to the Indians, who in anticipation of the peace had returned and sought parleys with this Government, he made certain propositions, which without doubt had the same content, even though implicitly. The Indians, advised by Father Rasle against the acceptance of these, held to the priest's view. There is no chance to doubt that these propositions touched religion: for Father Rasle declared that in the grand conference of Portsmouth (Piscataqua), Governor Dudley did not set these propositions before the Indians,<sup>2</sup> and in the conference itself, the Indians were not forbidden to have their priest. On the contrary, they left the conference with the idea that no change in religion had occurred.

On September 9, 1713, Father Rasle wrote to the Governor of Canada at Quebec about rebuilding the Norridgewok church, and in this connection he said that, "as it was very difficult to find workers, and food for them at Norridgewok, he was constrained to let the Indians speak to the English for them."<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, the Indians did speak to the Governor of Massachusetts on this subject.

On January 11, 1714, a delegation of Penobscot and Norridgewok Indians visited the Massachusetts Governor in Boston to make certain requests. In the course of this visit, "Abomaseen, the Norridgewok delegate, prayed that a meeting-house might be built for them at Norridgewok by the Englishmen and that

<sup>2</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 315, 316, 317 (note that the dates would be 1713, N.S.); cf. also p. 334; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 562, for Rasle to Vaudreuil, Sept. 9, 1713.

<sup>3</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 562; also Vaudreuil and Bégon to the Minister, Sept. 25, 1715, *Arch. Col., Corr. Gen.*, C 11 A, vol. 35 (*Pub. Arch. Can.*), pp. 192 ff.

they would pay for it." The Governor, according to the Council records, "replied that he would consider it."<sup>4</sup>

In Father Rasle's account of this request, it is asserted that "the Governor of Boston, thinking to flatter the Indians greatly, offered to have [the church] built, but they did not wish to accept this with the condition which he imposed on them, of giving them at the same time an English minister."<sup>5</sup>

Father Rasle wrote a very detailed version of the incident at a later date. In this he told of the Indians' deputing some of their principal men to demand workmen, with the promise to pay liberally for their work. The Governor received them with great demonstration of friendship and promised to bear all the expense of the building which they wished to construct;

but [he said], as it is not reasonable that I, who am an Englishman, should build a church without putting into it an English minister to keep it, and to teach prayer in it, I will give you one with whom you will be contented and you shall send back to Quebec the French minister who is in your village.

Thy word astonishes me [replied the deputy of the savages]. When thou camest here, thou didst see me a long time before the French governor; neither those who preceded thee, nor thy ministers ever spoke to me of prayer, nor of the great Spirit. They saw my furs, my skins of the beaver and the moose, and it is on them alone they thought. . . . On the contrary, the French taught me prayer. If when thou didst first see me, thou hadst spoken to me of Prayer, I would have had the misfortune to pray as thou dost; for I was not capable of distinguishing whether or not thy prayers were right. Therefore I tell thee that I hold to the prayer of the Frenchman; I accept it, and I shall keep it until the world shall burn and come to an end. Accordingly keep thy workmen, thy money and thy minister: I shall speak of them no more, but I shall ask the French Governor, my father, to send me some.<sup>6</sup>

The missionary's graphic account must be read as such, but it was undoubtedly founded on fact. And the sequel bore this

<sup>4</sup> Jan. 11, 1714, *Mass. Arch.*, 29-256; printed in *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 51 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Written to Bégon June 7, 1714, and cited by him on Sept. 25, 1715; cf. n. 3 above.

<sup>6</sup> Abbreviated from Thwaites, LXVII, 211.







out. On June 7, 1714, Father Rasle made a request to the French officials in Canada for financial assistance in building his church, emphasizing the good impression which such a favor would have on the Indians' spirit, in particular after the Boston incident.

The French officials, eager on their side to retain the Abenakis' friendship and to compete for it with the English, supported Father Rasle's request. The gist of their argument ran, "it will cost little and serve to attach these Indians more strongly to us."<sup>7</sup>

The requested subsidy was granted (June 15, 1716), and twice repeated.<sup>8</sup> On October 26, 1720, the Canadian authorities who also had requested similar aid for a church at St. John, informed their Home Government that the two churches were finished. "They are well built," they said. "This will be a motive which will attach the Indians to these missions."<sup>9</sup>

The village, which Father Rasle's church served was situated on a knoll at the great bend of the Kennebec, opposite the Sandusky River, and was laid out in the form of a square, surrounded by a stockade of round logs, nine feet high. Each side of the square measured one hundred and sixty feet, and had a gate in the middle. Two streets, crossing each other at right angles, connected the gates and divided the village into four smaller squares. Inside the walls there were twenty-six cabins, housing some three to four hundred persons — men, women, and children. Among them there were one hundred and twenty warriors.

Outside the village, a few yards from the eastern gate, stood the church.<sup>10</sup> It was a frame building, 55 feet long, 24 broad, and 16 high, surmounted by a belfry. It had five doors, and some windows (the latter 6 feet high), and an all-shingled roof. The head builder was an Englishman, a certain Jabez Brad-

<sup>7</sup> *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11 A, vol. 35, fol. 15; Vaudreuil to Regent, Feb., 1716; *ibid.*, vol. 36, p. 124.

<sup>8</sup> June 15, 1718, Oct. 2, 1719, June 2, 1720, *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 18; III, 22, 28, 44.

<sup>9</sup> *Corr. Gen., Canada*, vol. 42, fol. 8; cf. *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 48.

<sup>10</sup> *Heath Ms.*, in *Maine Hist. Soc. Arch.*, dated 1719; Bégon to Minister, Sept. 25, 1715.

bury, later captain of Fort Richmond, but then a trader; he was assisted by four workmen, of whom one was a negro. Father Rasle, like many another pastor in similar circumstances, felt dissatisfied with the builder, not so much because of the cost as because of the delay on the job and the imperfections in the structure. The work was rough, some of the boards being thicker than others, some of them thicker at one end than the other; there was a suspected weakness in the belfry, for which two bells were waiting. The cost was 813 beavers, besides extras. In addition to the church, Father Rasle had Bradbury build a priest's house. This measured 19 feet long, 11½ broad, and 7 high. It cost 260 beavers, over and above the clapboards which the Indians supplied. It is almost inconceivable, but it is true that Father Rasle sent his complaints about the workmanship to the Governor of Massachusetts himself.<sup>11</sup>

Despite Father Rasle's complaints, the church was evidently a good one in general. As he had paid dearly for its erection, the missionary thought nothing ought to be spared for its decoration or for the ornaments used at the services. Everything appropriate was provided, and was such as would be esteemed in the churches of Europe. The priest likewise formed a little society of about forty young Indians, who assisted at the services in cassock and surplice. They all had their special duties — so many to assist at Mass and to chant the office and to take part in the processions.

Besides the church, Norridgewok had two chapels, one dedicated to Our Lady, the other to the Guardian Angels. They were situated, each about three hundred yards from the village, one on the way to the woods, the other toward the river, and both had their religious appurtenances. The women of the village displayed a holy emulation in decorating them, especially for procession days. In all of these churches, the attractiveness of the services was increased not a little by the abundant illumination. The missionary had no need to be sparing in the lighting, for he had a plentitude of candles, which he made from the wax of the bayberry and tallow.

<sup>11</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 31:98 ff.; cf. *New England Quarterly*, XII (1939), 210.



There were at least two services every day — Mass and night prayers. On Sundays and holy days these were accompanied by special sermons: there were short exhortations almost every day. At various times there was school, too. Here, then, was a Catholic community in the midst of the Maine woods; and every person comprising it, except the priest, was an Indian.<sup>12</sup>

The story of the church, beginning with the Indians' plan and Bomaseen's request of Governor Dudley, is a clear indication, not only of the zeal of the missionary, but also of the Kennebec Indians' belief that even after 1713 they would continue to enjoy their religious freedom.

The English Government of Nova Scotia, which at that time claimed jurisdiction over the St. John and the Penobscot Indians, had never denied a priest to their Indians. At the beginning of 1715 it even made these Indians an explicit offer of religious freedom. On the occasion of the accession of King George I, it sent two British officers to the Indians of the mainland to obtain their allegiance to the new King. In return they made an offer of trade with Nova Scotia "at Boston prices," and gave assurance of perpetual freedom of religion. In reply, the Penobscots refused to recognize any "foreign king." They said that they had their own native king; they would have no foreigner make a fort or an establishment on their land; and, as for religion, "I am glad they leave me free. I will never change my religion."<sup>13</sup>

Father Rasle, on the Kennebec, did not see these British commissioners, "for the reason that the English pretend that this river is in the territory of the Boston Government." However, the missionary wrote to the Governor of Canada, in his letters of May 18 and June 11, 1715, that he expected that the Governor of Boston would have the same proposals made to the Indians of his mission. He sent the French Governor in advance "the reply which these Indians have agreed to make to them; it is like what the two other Indian tribes made."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Thwaites, LXVII, Oct. 15, 1722.

<sup>13</sup> *Public Archives of Canada, Transcripts, Nova Scotia Papers*, A 6, fols. 155 and 165 *et seq.*

<sup>14</sup> Bégon to the Minister, Sept. 25, 1715, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11 A, vol. 35 (*Pub. Arch. of Canada*, p. 208).

It is extremely doubtful that the Massachusetts Governor ever made such an explicit offer. Governor Dudley soon went out of office and his successor dealt with the Indians first in 1717.

## II

Religious liberty being thus tolerated, the most important difference between the Indians and the Massachusetts Government concerned the Abenakis' lands. This difference was manifested from the very day when the Treaty of Utrecht was announced to the Indians at the first Treaty of Portsmouth, July, 1713.

The English account of the latter treaty records what is certainly a protest by the Indians. When the English delegates explained that "the Queen of Great Britain's arms were superior to those of the King of France and he had surrendered up Newfoundland *and the land on this side*," the Indians replied, "the French never said anything to us about it and we wonder how they would give it away without asking us, God having at first placed us there and they have nothing to do to give it away." About the English coming to resettle their plantations, the Indians answered, "they should be glad to see the English settling their antient plantations and that they should never be disturbed in their rights and privileges there by them."<sup>15</sup>

For the Indians, there were two questions at issue, one having to do with English purchases, the other touching the Treaty of Utrecht. As to both they had the answers: first, no purchase of land entitled the buyer to sovereignty over it; and second, no treaty by French or English King transferred sovereignty over Indian lands. Their reaction is described in an official Canadian report of 1718, probably based on Father Rasle's information. The report, after stating that the English had told the Indians

<sup>15</sup> Printed in *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 49; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 562, Sept. 9, 1713; and letter of Oct. 12, 1723, in Baxter, *The Pioneers of New France in New England* (Albany, 1894), pp. 174 ff.

of the French King's giving the lands to the English, continued as follows:

The Indians at first could hardly credit this intelligence and answered that their missionaries had assured them of the contrary. The English replied that they had not advanced anything that they were not able to prove, and that whenever the Missionaries pleased, they would show them the Treaty in writing. The Abenakis then became excited and demanded by what right did the King of France dispose of their country. Their excitement had been more serious had not the Missionaries appeased them by telling them that they had been deceived by an ambiguous expression, and that their country was not included in that which had been ceded to the English.<sup>16</sup>

It is quite certain that the Indians made this resentment felt in Canada. The French officials there, who at the request of their Government were already seeking proofs that ancient Acadia did not include Maine and New Brunswick, now set about their task with greater vigor. They had to support the Abenakis in order to retain the latter's indispensable friendship.<sup>17</sup> The Indians awaited some explanation from the French.

### III

Massachusetts, on its side, apparently dropped the sovereignty question as it did the religious one. Its temporary policy was to proceed with settling and protecting the lands that had been occupied before the last war and meanwhile to gain over the Indians' friendship by trade and evangelization.

Relying on its previous purchases of land from the natives,<sup>18</sup> it began almost immediately after the peace to establish and develop settlements in Maine, even in the Kennebec district.

<sup>16</sup> *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 433; should be dated 1713; memo of 1718, describing the events immediately after the Peace (*New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 878).

<sup>17</sup> Memoir of 1713, *Parkman Papers*, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*; cf. *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 34, fol. 49, Nov. 15, 1713.

<sup>18</sup> Add the Plymouth patent and the settlements made at great cost. See Dec. 3, 1716, *Cal. State Papers, 1716-1717*, p. 412. On May 30, 1717, it explicitly submitted its charter right to the disputed territory, *ibid.*, p. 593.

As one means to aid in that business, the Government in 1713 appointed a "comtee of eastern claims and settlements," whose business was to sanction titles. Several of its members were personally interested in the lands in Maine and in the land companies that were formed to exploit them. For example, in 1714 the lands around Pejepscot River, formerly held by Richard Wharton,<sup>19</sup> were sold by his heirs to a syndicate for only one hundred and forty pounds. This syndicate (composed among others of Adam Winthrop, Oliver Noyes, and Stephen Minot, all members of the Legislative Committee on Titles) immediately set about obtaining from the General Court a confirmation of their title and encouragement in the settlement of three proposed new townships, one of which was Brunswick. Their idea and that of the Government about the Indians appears clearly in the following: "A strong settlement [in Brunswick] will greatly tend to dislodge the Indians from their principal fishery, keep them from the chief carrying places and be possibly a means of removing them further from us, if another war should happen."<sup>20</sup>

An added means to insure this result was military forts. The Government coöperated with the proprietors and helped to construct Fort George, opposite the lower falls in the Andros-coggin.<sup>21</sup> The Plymouth group, in their turn, built a stone fort at Cushenoc (Augusta). Both companies, working in concert, entered industriously into settlement plans and offered one-hundred-acre lots to individual families. As a result, establishments were made, sawmills erected, "husbandry began to thrive, and great stocks of cattle were raised."<sup>22</sup> The sturgeon fishery and the lumber trade likewise began to flourish; and in 1716 the Province formally extended its administration beyond the Kennebec as far as the Ste. Croix, according to the limits of its charter.

In August, 1719, another land company was formed to develop the territory even farther eastward. It was called the

<sup>19</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, I, 573; *Pejepscot Papers* (Maine Hist. Soc. Arch.).

<sup>20</sup> *Pejepscot Papers*, May 27, 1715. <sup>21</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 80 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Penhallow, *History of the Wars of New England with the Eastern Indians* (Cincinnati, 1859), p. 83.



Muscongus Company and dealt in lands between Muscongus and Penobscot Rivers, depending chiefly upon a deed from Madockawando (of 1694). Among leading members of the company were Elisha Cooke, his friend, John Clarke, and the ubiquitous Adam Winthrop, Oliver Noyes, and Stephen Minot. This company built and maintained St. George's Fort, on the river of that name, in the present town of Thomaston. At the same time Fort Richmond was built on the west side of the Kennebec, opposite Swan Island.<sup>23</sup>

The new settlements in Maine, as well as in other parts of Massachusetts, were peopled chiefly by persons from Ireland. These immigrants began coming in the year 1714, when two ships from that country, one of these from Cork, arrived in Boston.<sup>24</sup> During 1716, this Irish immigration increased greatly, and in the following years turned into a steady stream.<sup>25</sup> These Irish folk spread out toward Worcester County, and to New Hampshire and Maine. The historic Irish settlement of Londonderry, New Hampshire, was established in 1719: that of Cork in Merry Meeting Bay in the Kennebec in 1720. Brunswick had been increased by the Irish who came in 1718.<sup>26</sup>

By early 1719, it was officially reported that "some hundreds of people were then settling in Maine, and that hundreds more were expected that summer. . . . This country [New England] has increased in people more in the last seven years than in twenty before."<sup>27</sup> Governor Shute reported in the next year that five or six hundred people, men, women, and children from Ireland, had settled in Maine since 1717.<sup>28</sup> Most of these were from the North of Ireland and were Presbyterians. Nevertheless, the names of the persons and the ports from which they

<sup>23</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 97, 115.

<sup>24</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, May 31, June 7.

<sup>25</sup> Arrivals: May 21, June 16, June 25, 1716; Sept. 16, 1717, May 16, June 27, July 4, Aug. 11, Sept. 8, Sept. 29, 1718; May 18, Aug. 21, Nov. 3, 1719; all in *Boston News-Letter*; cf. also Cotton Mather, *Diary*, Sept. and Oct., 1717, and many items in 1718; *Report, Record Commission*, XIII, 41; *N.E. Hist. Gen. Reg.*, LXXIV, 99.

<sup>26</sup> *Journal, Am. Irish Hist. Soc.*, XVIII (1919); *Early Irish Pioneers in New England*; and 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, II, 204; VI, 1-17.

<sup>27</sup> Bridger to Popple, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXI, no. 161.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1720.

sailed prove that many of the newcomers hailed from South Ireland and that they represented Irish families with no Scotch admixture.

As for religion, this latter group, while it could not have been Catholic in name, undoubtedly included a goodly number who had not really given up the faith of their fathers and some who recanted only in order to get entrance here. The "young men, boys, and maids" who were sold or sold themselves as indentured servants were surely not all Protestants in their homeland. Nor is there much room for doubt about several of the persons who became schoolmasters here.

One is reminded of the story of John Sullivan. Born in 1692 in Limerick, Ireland, he was in all probability a Catholic. In 1723 he arrived in York, Maine, under bonds to the master of the vessel for his passage-money. Parson Moody lent Sullivan money to discharge this obligation. The latter soon evinced an ambition to be a teacher and to prove his qualifications, he wrote a letter (tradition has it) in seven different languages, and again aided by his clerical friend, opened a school in Berwick. In 1735 he married a former fellow passenger and indentured servant, named Margery, who was twenty-two years younger than himself. They had several children, two of whom, John, Jr., and James, rose to positions of prominence in later years, but all of them by that time were non-Catholics.<sup>29</sup>

At least one project for settlement in Maine was started from England without consideration of Massachusetts' claims. This was planned by Thomas Coram and other ex-army men, and had to do with the territory east of the Kennebec. Although some of the statements made by them were evidently partisan, they vividly reflect the situation then existing as regards both the French and the Indians. For example, they prove that not all Englishmen interpreted the Treaty of Utrecht as did Massachusetts.

Among others, a statement of February 17, 1715, declared that: "By the late Peace, the tract of land desired for a settlement, seems to be left for the French who were in possession

<sup>29</sup> 3 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, I, 322.

of it before the Peace. . . . They think it in the English interest to settle therefore *between Kennebec and Ste. Croix, lest the French should.*" <sup>30</sup>

The English undertakers, in their strife against the Massachusetts claims, also accused the New England folk of many crimes against the Indians, particularly of deceit in the purchase of lands. In explaining the difficulties which a new settlement faced from the Indians, these English folk declared that the settlers

must very early persuade [the Indians] that they have no design to rob them of their land, that they do not justify the older Plantations in their proceedings, that they shall find them another sort of people than those of New England. . . . Above all [the settlers] must be most religiously exact in their treaties, which is a point the more early Plantations have failed in. I have been present when an article of the Peace has run in one sense in the English and quite contrarie in the Indian by the Governour's express order and this has brought unnumbered mischiefs upon them.<sup>31</sup>

Bridger, the royal surveyor, also gave his opinion of the land company, to whom he was opposed:

There is but 6 or 7 of these new Proprietors who have bought all the old deeds and claimes that any one pretended to have in that part of the Province, being the easternmost part. They now have divided this purchase into shares, the uppermost division is 70 miles, the least from the sea.<sup>32</sup>

The New England folk won out in this land matter, as they did in other controversies, both with the Crown and with the Indians. The victory, however, was not without taint, nor without tragedy.

<sup>30</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXVIII, no. 224; cf. nos. 65, 110, 212.

<sup>31</sup> Bannister to Council of Trade, *Cal. State Papers*, XXIX, June 6, Dec. 20, 1717.

<sup>32</sup> Bridger to Popple, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXI, no. 161. Cooke was one of the half-dozen speculators here referred to.

## IV

The most potent means employed by Massachusetts to keep the Indians quiet was trade. As the English tenure of Nova Scotia left distant Quebec the only outlet for the French-Indian trade, the English quickly improved this advantage by offering to establish trade (truck) houses for the Indians and to pay high prices for their beaver. Thus they drew the Indians into the Boston orbit. By this means they likewise induced them to listen to the English demand that they invite the other Abenakis, now domiciled in Canada, to return to this district.<sup>33</sup> The Indians even welcomed the rise of the new settlements, for example, Georgetown, and the establishment of two trading houses, in private hands, which were set up on the Kennebec before the end of 1715.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately, part of the English trade was in rum. All authorities, both French and English, opposed this kind of traffic, but without success. Like all the Catholic missionaries to the Indians, Father Rasle was strongly opposed to it. At the end of the year 1714 (December 27), Governor Dudley communicated to the Council a letter from Captain Moody, of Casco Fort, *and another from the French priest*, complaining of "Disorders and Outrages committed among the Eastern Indians by interloping Traders selling of 'em Rum and other Strong Liquors tending to the last mischief. . . ." The Council investigated the complaint.<sup>35</sup>

Father Rasle continued his opposition to the rum trade, and in this he was supported among others by the Massachusetts Governor (Shute), the Rev. Mr. Baxter (*House Journal*, June 27, 1718), and the Massachusetts Commissioners (1720).

Apart from rum, however, trade with the English was both necessary and pleasing to the Indians. Even Father Rasle himself obtained a good part of his personal necessities from this

<sup>33</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Jan. 11, 1714, Treaty of Portsmouth, 1714; *Coll. de Mss.*, II, 562; *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 42; see also *ibid.*, 52, 55, 56, 64 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Father Rasle's letter to his nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, printed in Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 153; cf. also Bégon to Minister, Sept. 25, 1715, note 14 above, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 6:287.



source, although he could not help but deplore the growing intimacy of Indian and English that resulted therefrom.

## V

An important part of the New England Indian policy was religious. The Massachusetts authorities, instead of forcing the Indians to expel their French Catholic missionaries, attempted to persuade them to accept Protestant teaching. This policy, plainly hinted at by Governor Dudley in January, 1714, when he proposed having an English minister in the Indians' church, was followed up a few months later at the Portsmouth Conference of July, 1714, with no result.<sup>36</sup>

The idea of Protestantizing the Indians was not uncommon at the time,<sup>37</sup> and when the new settlements at Arrowsick, Georgetown, and Brunswick began to be made, "some devout persons there, while yet without a regular minister, applied themselves to carry on religious exercises, . . . and also to give instructions to the Indians."<sup>38</sup> By August, 1716, they had obtained the services of the Rev. Hugh Adams, who designed to settle in Georgetown and "began to learn the language of the Eastern Indians, with hopes to gain them over from the French Popish Idolatry by our own True Protestant Gospel."

During his short stay of five weeks in Georgetown, he had an experience that affected his whole life. Being not only a minister, but also a physician, he was visited one day by none other than "Sebastian Rale the French Popish Jesuite of Norridgewok." The priest was suffering from "an arthritic tumour, inflammation and acute pain in his shoulder, the cure whereof in three days almost I was an instrument to accomplish gratis; if possible thereby to gain him to amity towards our English settlements at the Eastern Parts, so adjacent to said settlement." This incident, which had other consequences, occurred shortly before Governor Shute's arrival in Boston.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 64 ff.      <sup>37</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXVIII, 389.

<sup>38</sup> Cotton Mather, *Diary*, 7 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 336, Feb. 23, 1715/1716.

<sup>39</sup> *Ms. in Mass. Hist. Soc.*; cf. *Proceedings*, First Series, III, 324-328. The *Diary* covers the period Dec. 7, 1724, to March 27, 1728, so that its first part was a memoir.

The new Governor, who arrived at Boston October 4, 1716, was at once (October 6th) made acquainted with the Indian problem and with the religious part of its attempted solution. Invited by the New England Company for Propagating the Gospel, he became the head of their commissioners here and readily entered into their program, in association with Rev. Mr. Mather and Judge Sewall.<sup>40</sup>

The result was that on November 22nd, the Legislature voted, "To provide some ordained minister to go to Fort George, Brunswick, to learn the language, to visit the Indians, to work himself into their friendship, to promise them a meetinghouse for the worship of God, if they will attend it." It also ordered that an annual salary of one hundred and fifty pounds be provided for that minister and that a young scholar should be sent to learn the language and be assistant and schoolmaster at a salary of twenty pounds; that ten pounds be made available to purchase "curiosities for the children as stimulus and reward," and finally that the Foreign Society be invited to aid in the work.<sup>41</sup> There was, however, much difficulty in finding the minister to undertake this service.<sup>42</sup>

Finally in July, 1717, the Rev. Joseph Baxter was obtained for the work. He was then forty-one years of age and for twenty-two of those years he had been settled minister at Medfield, which gave him a year's leave of absence for the Indian mission.<sup>43</sup> His contract with the Massachusetts Government began August 1, 1717, on which day he set out from Boston with Governor Shute for the Indian Conference to be held at Arrow-sick (Georgetown). Like the merchants and the militia, he was to aid the Government in solving the Indian problem,<sup>44</sup> which had recently become grave.

<sup>40</sup> Sewall, *Diary*, III, 106.

<sup>41</sup> *House Journal*, Nov. 15 . . . 22, 1716.

<sup>42</sup> Cotton Mather, *Diary*, 8 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 391, 396, 443, 445, 448; *House Journal*, June 21, 1717.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *House Journal*, Nov. 15, 1718. The Rev. Joseph Baxter was born in Braintree, June 4, 1676. He received his first degree July 5, 1693. He preached his first sermon at Braintree Nov. 11, 1694, and at Medfield Nov. 25, 1694, and settled there April 26, 1695, Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 71, note.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Mass. Council Records*, Nov. 8, 1717; Mather, *Diary*, II, 468, Aug. 2, 1717: "I would send some Instrument of Instruction for the assistance of one who is labouring among our Eastern Indians."

## VI

In time the new settlements had begun to disturb the Indians, for whom they constituted far more than a political difficulty. What with new houses, clearings, dams, and the sturgeon fishery combining to scare game from the woods and ruin the river for fishing, the new settlements became an ever-increasing danger to the Indians' accustomed means of subsistence. The Indians were deterred from manifesting their concern too openly, partly because of their practical dependence on the English trade, partly on account of their own reluctance to renew a war just ended, and partly also by their uncertainty of the issue without aid from the French. Indeed, for these very reasons, some if not many of the Indians, apparently had ceased to have any concern in the matter.<sup>45</sup>

But there were many Indians who felt otherwise. For these there is good reason to believe that "the projected fort at Pejepscot" brought to an end whatever there was of previous acquiescence to English advancement.<sup>46</sup> The erection of forts seemed to the Indians quite different from that of houses and trading places; it was, as they later expressed it, "acting in peace as though it were war."

In the early months of 1716 they prepared to make definite remonstrance. The Indians, however, could hardly have arrived at this stiffening of their attitude without some assurance of aid from the French. This they received because their increasing trade with the English had made a deep impression in Canada.

On September 25, 1715, one of the Canadian authorities wrote to his Home Government about the situation and as usual suggested the help of religion. He wrote: "As the Indians are all Catholics and very devoted to their religion . . . the missionaries could always use this fact to prevent the Indians from declaring themselves against us." He then went on to

<sup>45</sup> Nov. 7, 1715, Ramesay to Minister, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, 1715, vol. 35, fol. 15. (This information must have come from Father Rasle, in the early fall of 1715.)

<sup>46</sup> Nicholson to Lords of Trade, Aug. 13, 1715, *Pub. Arch. Can.*, B.T.N.S., II.

explain how the missionaries had already shown their interest — even by offering suggestions about trade. The missionary in question was Father Rasle, who had made at least one remark on trade in his letter of June 7, 1714.<sup>47</sup>

The missionaries also had much to do with another and a very important French step to retain the Abenakis' friendship. It led to a change in diplomatic policy. The French Court, which had been uncertain of making good its claim to the disputed territory in Maine and New Brunswick, planned for a moment to have all the Abenakis remove to Cape Breton.<sup>48</sup> In the spring of 1713, the French Minister wrote to Vaudreuil and to St.-Castin, hoping that the latter would do his best to induce the Indians of "Acadie" to follow this plan.<sup>49</sup> Father de la Chasse, missionary of the Penobscots, was applied to for the purpose of conveying that message to the Indians. He was entirely opposed to it. He asserted that

only a person ignorant of the extreme attachment these Indians bear their own country could make them such a proposition, and that the Indians would not comply. All that could be gained thereby is that, from friends which they had hitherto been and [which they] were no longer, except from motives of religion, they would become enemies, the more irreconcilable, as they would believe they were trifled with.

His own opinion was that an understanding ought to be come to, as soon as possible, which would establish boundaries of the two nations and extricate the Indians from difficulty. These latter ought to be *guaranteed assistance from us, even should they be constrained to have recourse to arms for the preservation of their country*. All admitted the soundness of this advice,

<sup>47</sup> Memo cited above, Sept. 25, 1715.

<sup>48</sup> *Arch. Aff. Etrang., Mém. et Docs., Amérique, XXIV (Pub. Arch. Can., pp. 172-176).*

*Note.* The French Court's willingness to sacrifice the Abenakis' lands may be illustrated by part of the negotiations, preliminary to the treaty. On August 10, 1712, the French thought of a compromise. This consisted in an exchange of northern and eastern Nova Scotia, which the French would retain, for the coast of Maine and New Brunswick to a depth of ten leagues, which the French would cede to the English.

<sup>49</sup> 1713, March 29 and April 8, *Arch. Colonies, B 31, fols. 26, 35.*



which was given by a man intimately acquainted with the Abenakis. It was resolved to adopt it, and the missionaries were instructed to re-encourage the Indians.<sup>50</sup>

The French officials in Canada were convinced that the New Englanders, with their sixty thousand man-power, had their eyes on the conquest of Canada, and that, if the same New Englanders could gain the friendship of the Abenakis, it would be all over with New France. The French, therefore, must help the Abenakis. Vaudreuil had that idea in France in February, 1716, and returned to Canada with (a partial) approval of it.<sup>51</sup> His associate in Canada, M. Bégon, who also must have had the same idea, may well have acted on it diplomatically in the previous autumn. A hint from him of French support would have heartened those Indians. In any case, it is certain that, even before Vaudreuil's return, the Kennebec Indians had begun to oppose the English.

It is not improbable that Father Rasle had been the agent in passing on to his Indians a hope of French assistance. It is certain that he had made some efforts at the beginning to prevent the extension of English settlement in his district

the consequences of which he foresaw, but he did not consider himself bound to make any stronger demonstration at that time, because it would be a useless risk of his life; the English would not be the less established; and aware of the Jesuit's designs against them, would have done him serious harm. He knew that a price had been set on the head of his confrère, Father Aubry, for the same reason at the beginning of the last war; but the latter succeeded in removing the English and had nothing to fear then from any of the Abenakis — circumstances which no longer exist.<sup>52</sup>

If in the late months of 1715 or the early ones of 1716, Father Rasle had given his Indians the suggestion of French support, their resistance to the English at that moment would have a fairly complete explanation.

<sup>50</sup> Mem. of 1718, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 817 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Vaudreuil to Regent, Feb., 1716.

<sup>52</sup> Mem. of 1718, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 878 ff.

In any consideration of this matter, place should also be given to the fact that the winter of 1715-1716 was exactly the time when English settlers in Brunswick and Georgetown began to teach the Protestant religion to the Indians. This must have aroused resentment among the Abenakis, for it is absolutely certain that they loved their own religion. Of all the ties which bound them to the French, that was the strongest. Any English attempt to undo it or weaken it was certain to meet opposition. This fact was put quite clearly by Father Rasle when he wrote that although the Indians were not indifferent to their interests in trade, "their faith is infinitely more dear, and they think that [if they joined the English alliance] they would soon find themselves without missionary, without sacraments, without sacrifice, without almost any exercise of religion."<sup>53</sup>

Whatever the specific occasion, signs of restlessness were exhibited by the Indians in the early months of 1716. News to this effect was received by the Massachusetts Council in early March.<sup>54</sup> By the end of May, definite information was given to that body that the Indians were gathering in great numbers for a council. In early June the Indians themselves sent messengers to the Massachusetts Government.

One of these was the famous Bomaseen. They objected to the forts built upon Indian lands by the English. The Lieutenant-Governor answered that the Government "did not pretend to be masters of said forts, that the forts were built only against pirates that might otherwise take away the goods, which the Government had a mind to send that way to trade with 'em. . . ." <sup>55</sup> The Indians, dissatisfied with Massachusetts' answer, sent other messengers in a month, with a letter imparting their dissatisfaction with their previous delegates (who they said had not faithfully discharged their commission), and also making very bold demands on the Government.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Letter to his brother, in Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 174.

<sup>54</sup> Letters from Maine, New Hampshire, and New York, *Mass. Council Records*, March 12, March 18, 1715/16, 6:430 ff.

<sup>55</sup> Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 343; *Mass. Council Records*, 6:485, June 11, 1716.

<sup>56</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, July 10, 1716.

The Indians' letter, signed by eight chiefs of the tribe, was written for them by Father Rasle. It was in this letter that the Indians said, "by building forts in the Eastern Country, the English acted in peace as though 'twere war, and that the English settlements there were on Indians' land."<sup>57</sup> Besides this, the letter said:

the English tell [the Indians] I have bought of the ancient Indians such and such lands. I [Father Rasle] tell them 'twas after this manner: the Englishman offers a bottle of Rhum for such a tract of land, the Indians agree, the Englishmen asks the Indians' name and writes it down, and so the bargain is made and shown to dazzle the Indians' eyes. The Indian, and the Englishman, too, knows that this is not buying.

Furthermore, by the laws of all kingdoms, the Guardians of pupils [wards] can't sell nor alienate the estates of their pupils. I say then to the Indians, you are masters of the land, which God has given you to live on, but tho the English should give all their treasures, they can't buy it, because your children, whose guardians you are, will forever re-enter into their estates. This is a law established all the world over.

Moreover, if the English had bought the land in form, you [Indians], having retaken it three times by force of arms, are become masters of it. All these I wrote to Mr. Dudley.<sup>58</sup>

It is probable that the letter also included a statement of the Indians' consent to the settlements already made and a demand for fixed boundaries for the future. This idea, which had been suggested by Father de la Chasse, was certainly shared by Father Rasle, and was the Indian program at Arrowsick in the following year. It would represent a compromise on the part of the Indians. But in Massachusetts, the Lieutenant-Governor thought the letter "insulting"; and the full Council meeting, which was specially summoned to consider it, sent messengers to the Indians to *demand* their reasons.<sup>59</sup>

The Massachusetts Government's messengers did not see the

<sup>57</sup> Henry Flint, *Commonplace Book* (ms. in Mass. Hist. Soc.).

<sup>58</sup> Father Rasle to Moody, Feb. 7, 1720, *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 6:485, 488; cf. Sewall, *Diary*, III, 92.

Indians or the priest, who were away for their usual fishing at the coast. (The priest visited Rev. Mr. Adams at that time.) No official answer was given by the Indians. Thus matters stood at the arrival of the new Massachusetts Governor, Samuel Shute (October 4, 1716).

## VII

Governor Shute was rather a pompous individual, a stickler for the prerogative, and little used to the ways of New England. He did not get along well with the Legislature here, nor with the Indians. Shortly after his arrival, preparations were made for a conference with the Indians, which finally took place at Arrowsick (Georgetown) on August 9, 10, 11, 1717.

The Governor, having begun his address to the Indians by the assumption that they were fellow subjects of the English King, placed his propositions before them. The first of these was religion. He told the Indians that the English King and people were "Christians of the Reformed Protestant Religion," and that the Bible (which he held up before them) was the only rule of their "Faith, Worship, and Life." Declaring further that "we would gladly have you of the same religion with us," he presented to them the Rev. Joseph Baxter as the missionary of that religion, and requested for him a respectful and affectionate treatment.

The Indians had as their speaker Wiwurna, one of their Sachems. When it came his turn, he immediately denied Governor Shute's assumption that the Indians were English subjects, declaring that Governor Shute's predecessors had regarded them as under no other government than their own. Furthermore, he said, as to being obedient to King George, they should be if they liked the offers he made them and if he did not disturb them in their lands.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Hutchinson (*History*, II, 203) equivalently admits the correctness of the Indians' position: "If a view be taken of all the transactions between the English and them from the beginning, it will be difficult to say what sort of subjects they were, and it is not certain that they had promised any subjection at all."



Wiwurna also rejected, although quite courteously, Shute's suggestion in the matter of religion. Later he made an offer "to cut off their lands as far as the [Arrowsick] Mills and the coasts to Pemaquid." Finally the Indian leaders presented a letter, written by Father Rasle, containing the French King's statement that he had not given away the Indians' lands by the treaty and that he stood ready to succor them if their lands were encroached upon. "Which letter his Excy. read and rejected as not worthy of his Regard, and the Indians returned" to their camping place.<sup>61</sup>

The Indians' departure did not actually put an end to the Arrowsick Conference. On the next day (August 11th, O.S.) some of the Indians returned with a different speaker, who immediately made a further concession to the English. He desired the English to settle as far up the river as they had ever settled. The Indians did not wish war. What they desired was liberal supplies of food and ammunition for their hunting. Governor Shute agreed to requests for these and other similar Indian wants. When he returned to Boston, he had the English account of the treaty printed, and later sent a copy of it to Father Rasle.<sup>62</sup>

After his return to Boston, the Governor also received the thanks of the House for "his steady asserting and maintaining the *just Right and Title* of the English subjects to their lands in that country." The House noted especially that this gave "a hopeful prospect of quiet and safety to [the subjects of] His Majesty who are resettling in those parts."<sup>63</sup> It never definitely acknowledged the Indians' rights, either to independence or to their own country. These rights Governor Shute also refused to consider. From then on, the war had really begun; at least the issues leading to war were already drawn.

<sup>61</sup> It does not appear that Vaudreuil told the Indians of France's new alliance with England.

<sup>62</sup> *Treaty of 1717*, etc. (Boston, 1717), reprinted in 1827; also in 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, III, 361-375; see Shute to Father Rasle, Feb. 21, 1718/19.

<sup>63</sup> *House Journal*, Oct. 26, 1717. The House thereby equivalently threw the weight of Government behind the land companies. It is noticeable that the same House never enabled the Governor to implement the promises he made to the Indians.

In the five years that intervened before the outbreak of war, attempts were made by the English to beguile, deceive, divide, and menace the Indians; in fine, to avoid the issue. But the Government made no attempt either to recognize any right on the part of the Indians, or to arrange a compromise with them.

When the Governor's party left Arrowsick, the Rev. Mr. Baxter remained to take up his work as Indian missionary. According to Father Rasle, "the minister went out to seek the children; he flattered them, he made them little presents, he urged them to come to see him, in short he worked for two months with . . . much activity." Father Rasle called it "useless activity," declaring that the minister was unable to win a single child. But Mr. Baxter made sufficient impression on some of the Androscoggin Indians at Pejepscot to have three chiefs "ask for a small praying house to be built near the fort for the English and us to meet in on Sabath days." <sup>64</sup>

In Mr. Baxter's preaching to the Indian grown-ups, he attacked the Catholic doctrines and practices. Father Rasle charged him with turning these into ridicule; and finally wrote him a Latin letter of one hundred pages in defense of the Catholic Church.<sup>65</sup> Mr. Baxter, who received this letter two days before his first return to Boston, wrote a short reply, also in Latin. To this the Jesuit returned a speedy answer, paying much attention to a criticism of the minister's Latin. Finally, in April, 1719, Mr. Baxter answered this with a defense of his own learning; and there the correspondence ceased. Mr. Baxter's simple and correct Latin shows that Father Rasle had been oversevere in his attack on the minister's clerical knowledge. The letters also show that Mr. Baxter intentionally avoided specific arguments about religion.<sup>66</sup>

Certain it is that the minister was no worthy rival for the Jesuit in the office of Indian missionary. He knew hardly any-

<sup>64</sup> Oct. 3, 1717, *Mass. Arch.*, 31:94.

<sup>65</sup> Reference to Father Rasle's letter in Thwaites, LXVII, 67 ff. Governor Shute stated that Father Rasle excommunicated the Indians who went to the minister's services.

<sup>66</sup> Ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*; printed in Baxter, *Pioneers*, pp. 397-404.

thing of the Indian language or of the Indians' character. He had not lived a score of years with them, sharing their hardships and consoling their sorrows. Unlike Father Rasle also, he had no corporate background to supply these and other deficiencies. The fact that he came at that particular time of crisis also made his very motive suspected.<sup>67</sup>

Governor Shute made a defense for Mr. Baxter in his letter to Father Rasle of February 19, 1718/19: <sup>68</sup>

It seems strange to me that one who professes himself a Christian missionary as you do . . . should not only oppose but even ridicule a mission in the same Glorious Name and for the same Blessed End, *altho' the Method taken may be very differing*. Your conduct in this affair does not seem to be agreeable to the spirit and practise of the Great Apostle in his Epistle to the Philippians, I, 15, 16, and following. . . . Upon which Catholic Principle I had reason to expect that instead of hind'ring and abusing Mr. Baxter, you should have embraced and bid him welcome, if not as a brother on all accounts, yet at least as a fellow labourer in the work of the Lord. . . .

These were words intended for the Indians, and not for the priest. Indeed, as a postscript to them, the Governor reminded Father Rasle of the anti-priest law in Massachusetts made against Christian missionaries!

Rev. Mr. Baxter made two visits to the Indians during his year's employment by the Massachusetts Government. At the end of that term, although offered a renewal of his contract and personally willing to accept it, he was not given further leave of absence by his church in Medfield.<sup>69</sup> His mission was, on

<sup>67</sup> Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 151.

<sup>68</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 377 ff.

<sup>69</sup> *House Journal*, July 4, 1718, Nov. 15, 1718. He made another mission in Aug.-Sept., 1721.

*Note.* While the Government here was seeking a successor for the office, the Rev. Mr. Mather penned the following unique entry in his *Diary*: "If the French Priest who is an instructor to the Indians in our Eastern Countrey might be brought over to the Protestant Religion, it would be a wonderful Service to the Countrey. Some are not without hopes that this may be done; I would make an Essay towards it by writing largely in the Latin Tongue unto him." No evidence is available that he ever did so. (Cotton Mather, *Diary*, Sept. 11, 1718, 7 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 554.) It is worthy of mention in this connection that Mr. Baxter, in his first letter to Father Rasle, wrote, "You who are thought by some to be a man of exalted piety and sanctity . . ." (Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 145 n.).

the whole, a failure, and the Government then failed to find a successor.

## VIII

Meanwhile, the Kennebec situation got worse. The Governor's parley and Mr. Baxter's mission, instead of easing the tension with the Indians, had rather the opposite effect. According to Father Rasle, a council of the Norridgewoks refused to ratify the second part of the Arrowsick treaty. The same result occurred, again according to Father Rasle, "with the Abenakis domiciled in Canada." As soon as the latter heard of the treaty, they and their allies "sent two young men to Norridgewok" to disallow and reject it.<sup>70</sup>

About the same time as the Abenakis held their council, they deputed some of their number to Governor Vaudreuil to explain to him their situation and to demand of him, who called himself their father, what help he would give them, his children, in case of a rupture. When Vaudreuil, who was much embarrassed by reason of France's recent alliance with Britain, answered them evasively, they flatly told him, "We Indians will unite to expel all foreigners, be they who they may!" They thus obtained from him a verbal promise of help, which, although they doubted its sincerity, they took care to report through all their villages.

Soon afterwards, they began reprisals against the English. In the early summer of 1718, they harassed those new English settlers whose houses or lands were above Arrowsick Mills. They killed or stole cattle and damaged property, but they injured nobody's person. They thus forced many of the new settlers to retire to Falmouth and other places. And when others of the new settlers complained to Father Rasle and threatened to appeal to Governor Shute, the Indians called a council and sent a defiant reply. Its gist was, "Seek redress from the person who authorized them to build on the Kennebec."

<sup>70</sup> Flint, *Commonplace Book*.



At the same time Father Rasle sent a letter to the Massachusetts Governor.<sup>71</sup> In this letter the priest professed himself a lover of peace, according to the maxim that the Church abhorred the shedding of blood (*Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine*), but he added that he would advise the Indians of their right to defend themselves by war if need was. He gave an "allegorical character of the Indians' temperament and resentments," and spoke of the ill treatment received by the Indians from an English justice of the peace. Likewise, he referred to the corruption of the Indians by strong drink by some English. Finally he set forth at length his indignation at Rev. Mr. Baxter's mission, and laid down the Indians' idea of the Treaty of Arrowsick. All this is known from the Governor's reply.

The Governor did not answer this letter immediately. Already acquainted with the Indians' actions before the receipt of the priest's letter, he sent troops who protected the settlers in the district.<sup>72</sup>

From that time on, the reprisals of the Indians were regarded as their "insolence," and were almost always attributed to the "instigation of the Jesuit,"<sup>73</sup> whose removal by the French was requested by the Massachusetts Governor three times before February, 1720.<sup>74</sup>

## IX

Meanwhile, the Penobscot tribe had entered more largely into the story. In 1715, when they rejected the requests of the Nova Scotia Government for acknowledgment of King George and permission for English establishments, Father de la Chasse

<sup>71</sup> *Memoir of 1718; House Journal*, June 8, Oct. 29, Dec. 2, 1718; *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 32; *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 274 ff.

<sup>72</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Aug. 5, 6, 11, Sept. 26, 1718. From that time onward, the interest of the Government was constantly sought and was constantly obtained by the land proprietors "so that his Majesties' Subjects may not be obliged to leave their Houses and Settlements to their utter Ruin and Destruction." Shute to General Court, Oct. 29, 1718. See *House Journal*, Dec. 2, 1718, petition for relief of divers families arriving at Falmouth from Ireland.

<sup>73</sup> Shute to Council of Trade, Sept. 29, 1718, *Cal. State Papers*, XXX, no. 700; Shute to General Court, Oct. 29, 1718, *Mass. Court Records*, 10:289.

<sup>74</sup> Shute to Popple, Feb. 17, 1719/20, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 108.

was their missionary. In late 1716 he left them to become Superior of the Jesuits in Canada. In 1718 he was replaced at Penobscot by Father Etienne Lauverjat.

The new missionary, at that time thirty-nine years of age, had been in Canada for several years and had been attached to St. Francis' mission under Father Aubery.<sup>75</sup> He was destined to spend a long period as missionary at Penobscot, where he showed himself a just and conservative influence. Arriving there at the very time when the Norridgewoks began their reprisals against the English, he found the Penobscots unwilling to join the former in their actions. In fact, the priest was asked by his new flock to write a letter to the Governor of Massachusetts and report their desire for peace, even though they had an occasion of their own. A certain man of this village had been murdered by two Englishmen. The Indians chose to regard this, not as a cause of reprisal, but as an "accident" for which they would take no vengeance. Father Lauverjat wrote their letter.

Shortly afterwards, the priest received a letter from the Governor of Canada, dated July 16, 1718, criticizing his weakness in thus yielding to the Indians' desires. Father Lauverjat replied on August 19th, declaring that "if he had refused to write that letter or had expressed the wish to write in other terms, the Indians had determined to have their letter written by 'the minister of Menaskou' [i.e., Georgetown], or to go themselves to Boston and make a complete submission to the English." He added, however, that M. de Vaudreuil need not fear that the Penobscots would side with the English in the future, "because those who *had* leaned in that direction and who were said to have influenced the previous action were now dead. There remained at present only those wholly devoted to the French, or if there are some still pro-English, they have but little authority."<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> C. de Rochemonteix, S.J., *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France au XVII<sup>e</sup>me siècle* (Paris, 1896), III, 448; I, 35, n., 146, 147; Bécancourt Register (*Pub. Arch. Canada*).

<sup>76</sup> Vaudreuil to Minister, Oct. 31, 1718, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, vol. 39, 157; cf. *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 31, 32.

In the fall of that year an event occurred which partly justified the priest's conviction. The Penobscots learned that the English planned sending settlers to establish themselves on their river at Pentagoet and in the neighborhood.<sup>77</sup> On this occasion, Father Lauverjat was asked by the Indians to write the Massachusetts Governor a different kind of letter. It was a friendly but firm *aide-mémoire*, not to break the treaty.

. . . The accord which we made is that thou canst establish thyself as far as Pemaquid, but not farther . . . thou didst swear to be content with that, and didst promise never to do anything against this accord. Would it be possible that thou now desirest to violate thy word?

Father Lauverjat added a personal word:

You would do a great wrong to these people if you take away . . . their hunting ground, whence they draw almost all their subsistence. . . . The cause of peace will be served by your abandoning this design, if you really have it. . . .

For the time being, the Massachusetts Government made no further aggression in Penobscot territory.<sup>78</sup>

## X

In the autumn of 1718, both Governors wrote to their Home Governments.

M. de Vaudreuil's program, presented to the French Court in 1718, was a statement that he did not desire war, and that he had a man in Narantsouak who would get the Indians to do what he willed. "On the other hand," he declared, "M. Bégon would like some rattle-brained Indian to make an attack on the English which would start a war." Vaudreuil asked the Court whether,

if the Abenakis are not to be aided by some Frenchmen, we can with honor and in conscience precipitate this tribe into a

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* Perhaps they learned it from French sources. On Sept. 15, 1718, Father Rasle wrote Vaudreuil that the Governor of Boston was going to send 200 English families to settle on the Penobscot River, *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 32.

<sup>78</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 51:302 ff.; *Mass. Council Records*, Jan. 7, Feb. 18, 1718/19.

war against an enemy greatly its superior? What will become of ourselves if these Indians be worsted, and the English become masters of their villages? On the other hand, if there be any disposition to assist them, is it not more natural to inform the Governor of Boston that, unless the English retire from a country which belongs to our allies and which we cannot and do not pretend to cede to them by any treaty, they will have to do with the French, who will not be able to refuse their assistance to men who aided them in time of need, and who gave that aid only on condition that the favor would be reciprocated. . . .<sup>79</sup>

This letter, like every other official letter from Canada to the French Crown at the end of the year 1718, implored a fixation of the boundaries.<sup>80</sup>

As a result, the French Government, on March 22, 1719, proposed to the English Government that commissioners be appointed to fix the limits. At the same time it demanded that meanwhile the Governor of Massachusetts be prohibited from making settlements in the disputed area.<sup>81</sup> As a result, commissioners were appointed, but nothing apparently was accomplished. One sidelight on the affair reflects the result of the Massachusetts Government's communications. The Massachusetts agent in London wrote to Boston, on September 9, 1719: "It is proposed that when the limits are fixt, the Popish Priests shall be forbid under a strict penalty to pass over them into the English Territoryes on any pretense whatsoever. So that I hope we shall be made easy on that point. . . ." <sup>82</sup>

It is also evident from the outcome that both Governors were instructed to avoid war.

In 1719 and 1720, the pattern of affairs between the Kennebec Indians and Massachusetts was the same as that of the year previous, only more sharply defined. The Indians in-

<sup>79</sup> *Memoir of 1718.*

<sup>80</sup> Vaudreuil, Oct. 31, 1718; Bégon, Nov. 8, 1718; *Memoir of 1718, Coll. de Mss.*, III, 32, 33.

<sup>81</sup> *Arch. Col.*, B 41 1 56; B 41 1 57; B 41 1 63; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 892; *Aff. Etrang., Corr. Pol., Angleterre*, vol. 324, fol. 223.

<sup>82</sup> Jer. Dummer to Secy. Willard, Sept. 9, 1719, *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 449.



creased the number and extent of their reprisals against the new settlers and their possessions, but refrained from killing anyone. Again, they warned the settlers and the Massachusetts Government: again, they asked the French for help. On the Massachusetts side, there was more moving out by the settlers, more appeals for protection addressed to the Massachusetts Government by the land companies, more troops sent in answer to the appeals, more building of forts, more letters from the Massachusetts Government to the Indians and their priest, more search for a Protestant minister to convert the Indians, and always a nearer approach to war.

Running through it all, like a unifying motif, was the attempt by Massachusetts to remove Father Rasle from among the Indians.<sup>83</sup> From the end of 1718, one of the plans pursued by the English was a boring from within to reduce the priest's influence. As evidenced by the latter part of the Arrowsick Conference, there had long been a peace party at Narrantsouak, and the English plan was to make of the peace party a pro-English and anti-Jesuit party, by means of presents and other kinds of bribes.

Outstanding among the Indians thus practiced on by the Massachusetts Government was Bomaseen, a nephew to the then reigning chief, and long an influential member of the tribe in his own right. A prisoner in Boston during King William's War, he had been a delegate in every later Anglo-Indian Conference, and at least after 1713 appeared to be pro-English. This sentiment of his was improved by the English with proper attentions when they found him "very inclinable to accept of [the Governor's] favor." It is probable that he hoped to become his uncle's successor as chief, and that in this view he grouped around himself several retainers, to whom the Massachusetts Government accorded fitting recognition. Among these were Colonel John Baptist, the Indian named Ketteremogus, and another not named. They were all given commissions by the Governor of Massachusetts and the salaries

<sup>83</sup> To obtain a rival in the person of a Protestant minister turned out to be impossible.

corresponding to the commissions. For duties they carried messages and news, and always fomented opposition to the priest.

Father Rasle, however, successfully countered this policy in mid-1719 by putting the Indians to a severe test. They could choose between resisting Massachusetts or losing him. The English, unsuccessful in the bribery plan, did not discontinue it, but they had to reinforce it by another.<sup>84</sup>

As a result of the Indians' actions, "A considerable number of people lately arrived from Ireland [removed] from ye Eastern & other parts into ye Town of Boston by which ye Town [was] like to be put to a very heavy charge."<sup>85</sup>

The whole situation, when brought to the attention of the Legislature, occasioned a long and bitter debate and brought forth several different measures. One of them was to write to the Home Government, another to send commissioners to the Indians, and a third to send a body of fifty armed men to the Eastern parts.<sup>86</sup>

The letter to the Home Government, like previous communications on this subject, laid the blame upon the priest, and petitioned His Majesty to "use his instances with the Regent of France that no popish priests may be suffered to reside among the Indians within His Majesty's territories."<sup>87</sup>

The vote to send commissioners to the Indians represented a high point in the conservative program to arrange a compromise.

For these commissioners, while continuing the English tampering with the Indians, also proposed to them "a limited occupation of our own lands." The priest on his side was ada-

<sup>84</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 374, 442, 446, 447, 456; *Mass. Council Records*, 7:3, 12, 16, 67; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 941; Father Rasle to Moody, Feb. 7, 1720.

<sup>85</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 7:75, Oct. 31, 1719; see also Governor's Speech to General Court, *House Journal*, Nov. 4, 1719.

<sup>86</sup> *House Journal*, Nov. 4, 1719; *Mass. Council Records*, Jan. 21, 1719/20.

<sup>87</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXXI, no. 578 (Jer. Dummer to Council of Trade, Feb. 25, 1719/20).

*Note:* This was directed against both priests. In its preparation, the House had sought affidavits about Father Rasle's "stirring up the Indians to revolt." See depositions of John Minot, Nov. 27, 1719, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXI, 366; depositions of Lewis Bane, Dec. 2, *ibid.*, 365.

mant, convinced as he was that the Indians' lands and their religion were intimately connected. "You seize our lands against our will," he wrote, "and thereby take away our prayers, more valuable than our lands or bodies. You would govern us. . . . When the Indian says to the Englishman, 'why doe you this,' the answer is, 'you offend me, your Father bids you say it.'" As for himself, the priest declared "I can't by my character carry 'em forth to warr; I can absolutely hinder them when they haven't solid reasons for it; but when they have any, I shan't hinder them. . . . I'll tel them they may make war."

The Indians themselves took up the matter in their spring council, and sent messengers to Boston to petition for settling the boundaries and bettering the truck trade, and also offering to meet Massachusetts' demand for a token payment of their damages.

Meanwhile Judge Sewall had more or less successfully opposed the execution of the policy, initiated by the House for sending fifty armed men to the frontier.<sup>88</sup> Indeed Sewall opposed every resort to force by this Government, but in each instance he was less and less successful.

The apostles of force, on the other hand, grew always more insistent. By their conflict with the Governor on matters of jurisdiction, they prevented all legislation in the May session of 1720, and by their continued opposition, they prevented any compromise on Indian affairs in the July session. They even went to the extent of offering a reward of one hundred pounds to any person "that shall apprehend [Father Rasle] *within any part of this province*, and bring him to Boston, and render him to justice." Finally they continued the fifty fighting men in service.<sup>89</sup> The fall session of the Legislature brought

<sup>88</sup> *House Journal*, Dec. 1, Dec. 9, Dec. 10; *ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1720; *Mass. Arch.*, 30:58; *Mass. Council Records*, March 3, 1719/20; Sewall, *Diary*, 5 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, III, 245; Father Rasle, S.J., to Capt. Moody, Feb. 7, 1720, in Flint, *Commonplace Book*, May 3, 1720 (transcript in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*); cf. Baxter, *Pioneers of New France*, pp. 96-104; Georgetown Conference of July 20, 1720 (*Belknap Papers*, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*); *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 83, 100; Sewall, *Letter-Book*, II, 108 ff.

<sup>89</sup> The Council consented to this. *Mass. Council Records*, 8:71, 72, July 13, 1720; *ibid.*, 7:169, 173; *Boston News-Letter*, Aug. 29, 1720.

matters nearer to a break than ever. Violent measures were urged and persistently pressed by the House under the instigation of Elisha Cooke, and with a constant refrain against "Rasle the Incendiary."<sup>90</sup>

This is not the first time that Cooke has been mentioned here, but he deserves more than casual notice. He had long been a power. Bitter opponent of Governor Shute, passionate supporter of the land-bank scheme, and leader of the Popular Party, he was also interested in the raids made upon the royal timber reserves in Maine. Accused by Surveyor-General Bridger on this score, Cooke attacked Bridger, but was excluded from the Council by Governor Shute. Cooke then turned on the Governor, and so abused him that he was dismissed also from the clerkship of the Superior Court. The Popular Party, nevertheless, elected him to the House. In 1720, Cooke got himself elected Speaker, but Shute negatived the choice, and even dissolved the House when it refused to elect another Speaker.<sup>91</sup>

In late 1720, Cooke had recently returned from a journey to the Penobscot tribe, where he had gone in the interests of the so-called Muscongus Company and its affiliate, the Lincolnshire Company, to negotiate with that tribe for lands. They found the tribe's headquarters at "Agemoggan on Penobscot River" (Bay). This Indian settlement, pleasantly situated "upon the point of an island about 3 leagues S.E. from ye river," contained "about 30 wigwams & a chappel . . . [and had] about 200 souls," above one hundred of them men. The English group

<sup>90</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 7:176 ff.; *House Journal*, Nov. 2, 1720; Walton's Conference, Oct. 12, 1720; Shute to Lords of Trade, Dec. 12, 1720, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXII, 319. Flint, *Commonplace Book*.

<sup>91</sup> Sibley, *Harvard Graduates*, IV, 349 ff. For the rest of his story the source just quoted continues: "Cooke used, according to the rumor of the day, some henchmen to steal from Cotton Mather's house a private letter which was then used for his political agitation. He went to England to fight his battle vs. Shute, and although he lost in England, he again was elected to the House and the Council on his return."

By this time, Dunbar had succeeded to Bridger's place and to his quarrel with Cooke. The latter had become head of the Muscongus Company, and was charged by Dunbar with having "built sawmills in the heart of the Mast trees, one of which will saw 8000 feet of boards in 24 hours." Cooke finally met his match in Gov. Belcher. He died in 1737, leaving an estate of over £63,000, one of the greatest in the colony.



met there "the Indians' Fryer" and M. Castine. The Indians held a council on the land company's proposal and made answer that while they would like a trading house "fixed forever on ye point of an island (called Hilton Island) in Muscongus River," they would not negotiate about their lands. These, they declared,

belonged to their young men & they could not dispose of them from 'em; besides this, they did not care to have ye English settle among 'em for fear of being under ye same difficultys & inconveniences ye tribe of Indians att Kennebeck were, who were always contending with ye English & ye English with them, which they should carefully avoid, being desirous of living peaceably.<sup>92</sup>

Father Lauverjat, who reported the matter to the Canadian Governor, said that "the Abenakis would have consented to it if he had not advised against it, and he felt that he had done well to keep the [English] establishment down to one trading house."<sup>93</sup>

Cooke, disappointed at his trip to Penobscot, was present in Boston again for the November (1720) session of the Legislature. The House opened in an angry mood. On the 4th, they revived the resolve about Father Rasle. On this occasion, however, for the first time, they explicitly took the position that the Massachusetts anti-priest law applied to the territory east of the Kennebec.<sup>94</sup> In this, as well as in the matter of the Indians' paying damages, the Governor and Council agreed. But the House was eager to use drastic methods. On November 4th, it voted that an armed force of one hundred and fifty men be

<sup>92</sup> Thomas Fairweather, *Diary* (ms. in *Maine Hist. Soc. Arch.*); see Gyles to Shute, Sept. 16, 1720, in *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 87; for Agemogen, cf. *Baxter Mss.*, X, 238, 239.

<sup>93</sup> *Mémoire sur l'Acadie*, cited by Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites . . . XVII<sup>me</sup> siècle*, III, 467.

<sup>94</sup> *House Journal*, Nov. 4, 1720. The Governor had never claimed in his letters to England that the Indian territory belonged to this province. According to him, it was "in the neighborhood of this province, toward Nova Scotia," but he considered it "in his Majesty's territory." See letter to Lords, Feb. 17, 1719/20, in *Baxter Mss.*, X, 108.

sent to *Norridgewok* to execute both of these designs. The Governor naturally opposed this resolve.

Again the Council succeeded in delaying what would have been war, and a needless one at the time. For the peace party among the Indians had recently won the election at *Norridgewok* and the Indians were prepared to compromise on the land question, as well as to begin payment for damages.<sup>95</sup> In fact, the Indians did offer part payment, and gave hostages to secure the rest. They thereby fell into a trap, for it was asserted by the Massachusetts commissioners that the hostages were also given as security for the Indians' future good conduct. This difference in viewpoint eventuated into an acceleration of the already speeding war movement.<sup>96</sup> For the moment, however, it apparently served to set aside another angry demand of the House for drastic military action.<sup>97</sup>

## XI

The Governor and the Council had a plan to remove Father Rasle, without the use of force. With the hostages safely in their hands, with the peace party in power at *Norridgewok*, and with the peace motif dominant at *Penobscot*, these Massachusetts authorities set about the execution of their own plan.

The Council sent a letter to the *Kennebec* Indians "to direct them in the name of this Government to dismiss Sebastian Ralle, a French Jesuit, and not to suffer him to reside among them any longer."<sup>98</sup> On the same day (February 4/15, 1721) the Council also advised "that a letter be sent to Mr. Cornwall at *Arrowsick*, to desire that he would undertake the charge of

<sup>95</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 182; Gyles to Shute, Sept. 16, 1720, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 89. *Norridgewok* is English for *Narantuak*.

<sup>96</sup> *Baxter, Pioneers*, p. 281 ff.; *House Journal*, July 5, 8, 1721. That there were some Massachusetts people who agreed with the Indians on the hostage question and the land question too appears in a letter written by the Secretary of Connecticut to Lt.-Gov. Dummer of Massachusetts (*Baxter Mss.*, X; 236); cf. *Mass. Council Records*, 7:227.

<sup>97</sup> *House Journal*, Dec. 8, 9, 14, 1720; *Mass. Council Records*, 7:217, Dec. 17, 1720.

<sup>98</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 7:230, Jan. 24, 1720/21; cf. also Feb. 4.

a Missionary to the Kennebec Indians and reside among them as soon as Mons. Ralle be dismissed." <sup>99</sup>

This Government plan was a critical attack on the Indians' religion, at the expense of which they were thus required to purchase peace. The Indians replied that they would make answer after their Paschal-tide council, which usually took place in May.<sup>100</sup> What happened in that council is deduced from several bits of scattered data. Sentiment was divided: but on the matter of removing Father Rasle, and on the hostages, the majority clearly stood against the Massachusetts Government. A rumor, which got to the ears of the English Captain Moody, put this result in the words: "they charged the Government with folly in making new demands [i.e., about the priest] before that about the hostages is finished, and were resolved peremptorily to make payment and demand their hostages." <sup>101</sup>

According to the Indian custom, Father Rasle was present at the council and was invited to give his opinion. The priest, naturally stirred by the Massachusetts demand for his removal, and by the Indians' division among themselves, criticized them severely for not being of a united sentiment on their religion and their lands, both of which were in peril.<sup>102</sup> Secondly, Father Rasle must have accused the English of "using presents, caresses, threats and lies" to rob the Indians of their religion and their lands.<sup>103</sup> Thirdly, the priest must have ratified, if he did not recall, the idea that the Abenaki lands were not in the power of the Norridgewoks to alienate, but were the property of the whole Abenaki Nation, who had already spoken on the matter and whose opinion should again be sought. By this means several ends would be carried out. In the first place, the presence of delegates from the Canadian Abenakis at the coming parley

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

*Note:* Mr. Cornwall could hardly have consented to this, for on April 27, 1721, Mr. Mather wrote in his *Diary*, "I hope I have provided a Missionary for the Eastern Indians." The Rev. Mr. Baxter was at St. George's on Aug. 14, 1721. (Mather, *Diary*, 7 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 615, April 27, 1721.)

<sup>100</sup> Moody to Shute, *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 463.

<sup>101</sup> Moody to Shute, June 19, 1721, *ibid.*, IX, 465.

<sup>102</sup> Letter from Bégon, July 14, 1721, printed in Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 294.

<sup>103</sup> Letter from Bégon, in Baxter, *loc. cit.*

with the English would give a clear anti-English majority; next, it would also influence some of the pro-English Norridgewoks to change their minds, and lastly, it would convince the English that to insult the Norridgewoks would bring down on them the whole Abenaki Nation.<sup>104</sup>

Lastly, Father Rasle must also have had stern words to say at that council about the new chief and the other prominent pro-English Norridgewoks. It is certain that about this time the chief and these others were "degraded," which probably means that they were either put on public penance or even excommunicated by Father Rasle. In consequence of this, they would be prevented by the Indians from further exercise of their civil functions. If they had actively agreed with the English demand for the priest's removal, he would have felt justified in his condemnation.<sup>105</sup>

Steps were immediately taken for putting the resolutions of the Indian Council into effect. Six chiefs went to Canada on May 7/18, 1721, to invite the Canadian Abenakis to the parley. Meanwhile, the Governor of Massachusetts, judging that the Indians had finished their council, but had not sent him word of their decision, ordered Captain Moody (May 6th, O.S.) to make a new demand, in his name, that the Indians *immediately* dismiss the Jesuit. No official reply was received from this either, but only some rumors, which in fact were correct but not complete.<sup>106</sup> On June 5th, N.S. (May 26th, O.S.), two Indians sent a letter from Fort George to the Massachusetts Governor, "desiring that their Indian friends [the hostages] may be sent to Arrowsick per the first [*sic*] where they will meet them with skins according to promise."<sup>107</sup> Probably this was the In-

<sup>104</sup> Vaudreuil to Minister, Oct. 8, 1721, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 903.

<sup>105</sup> To Father Rasle, June 14, Sept. 25, 1721; both the above letters printed in Baxter, *Pioneers*, pp. 294, 299.

*Note:* At this council, Father Rasle also spoke to the Indians about "the news of the English governor, his great enemy, being turned out." (Bégon to Father Rasle, June 14, 1721.) This may refer to Elisha Cooke.

<sup>106</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, May 6, 1721; Moody to Shute, June 5, 19, 1721, *Baxter Mss.*, IX, 462 ff. In March the Governor had asked the Legislature to provide a present to the Five Nations, Hutchinson, *History*, II, 184 ff.

<sup>107</sup> *House Journal*, July 5, on which day the House received this letter sent down from the Council.



dian answer, so long expected by the Massachusetts Governor, and so indicative of a refusal of his demand. It set the date for the formal parley.

This parley brought an Abenaki ultimatum, "Give up the hostages, and retire from the Abenaki lands. Answer within three weeks." The ultimatum in turn encountered an intransigent Massachusetts House, which clamored for an army of five hundred men for Maine, to demand the surrender of Father Rasle and payment of damages, and, in case of Indian opposition by force to "kill and destroy them and waste [their] substance."

The Council's delaying action and the opposition of Judge Sewall, on the one hand, and on the other the Kennebecs' dismay at Penobscot defection, their own need of supplies, their desire of French aid, and their trip to Canada, all prevented the threatened outbreak of war. The dispatch of requests for instructions sent by both Governors to their Home Governments occasioned further delay, but not much decrease in tension. The return of orders to both Governors to maintain their stand, but avoid war, allowed a renewal of power politics in the next year, and occasioned the sending of armed forces to Norridgewok by Massachusetts, with the exclusive purpose of capturing the priest, but not molesting the Indians.

These armed forces were unsuccessful. They did not capture the priest,<sup>108</sup> but they did obtain his papers. Among these was a precious Dictionary of the Abenaki language, upon which the missionary had worked more than thirty years. The army's leader on his return presented this as a souvenir to none other than Elisha Cooke. He had also found some letters written to the priest from high Canadian officials, who were therein revealed as eager supporters of the Abenakis against the English. These letters, while they occasioned another official protest to Governor Vaudreuil (February 9, 1721/22) undoubtedly

<sup>108</sup> *House Journal*, Sept. 4 to 8, 1721; Sewall's protest, *Mass. Council Records*, Sept. 8, 1721; *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 57; *Arch. Col., Canada*, C 11 A 124, piece 199; Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 301; *Mass. Council Records*, Oct. 19, 1721; Father Rasle to his nephew, Oct. 15, 1722, Baxter, *Pioneers*, pp. 107 ff., 134; *House Journal*, Nov. 4, 7, 9, 16, 17; Sewall, *Letter-Book*, Jan. 15, 1721/22.

served also to tame the House's further boldness against the Indians. The March session "suddenly changed from vigorous measures for bringing [the Norridgewoks] to terms to schemes for appeasing and softening them; and a present was ordered to be sent to Bomaseen . . . to engage him in favor of the English." It was clearly due to the same circumstance that the efforts long made by the House to bring M. de St.-Castin to trial were dropped and that he was set at liberty after a face-saving examination.<sup>109</sup>

The Norridgewoks, on the other hand, were naturally aroused by the armed invasion of their territory and the attempt against their priest. French aid or no French aid, they were now determined to retaliate, depending only on their own brethren here and in Canada. In the spring of 1722 they "sent a deputation to the different Indian villages to engage them to lend a hand in the necessity wherein they were of making a just defense." The deputation was successful. Even the Penobscots were aroused, the more easily perhaps by the English capture and imprisonment of St.-Castin.<sup>110</sup>

On June 13th, a body of sixty Indians burned various houses on the lower Kennebec, and captured some English prisoners, all but five of whom they released. These five they kept to match the four Indian hostages still retained by the English. Shortly thereafter, six Indians attacked a sloop at Damariscotta. In neither case did the Indians kill anyone; the same absence of barbarity marked the rest of their increasing attacks on the English forts and settlements. It was a previously unknown kind of Indian warfare. It aroused the public, but it sobered the minds of Massachusetts legislators even more than the Vaudreuil letters had done. The House, on hearing the news, did not rush to war. On the contrary, it first proposed soldiers to protect the frontiers and then it agreed to the comparatively mild vote brought down from the Council, June 29th, to exchange prisoners and enter a treaty.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 205; *House Journal*, March 16, 23, 1721; cf. also Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 305.

<sup>110</sup> Father Rasle to his nephew, Oct. 15, 1722.

<sup>111</sup> Penhallow, *op. cit.*, p. 86; Hamilton, *Journal*, in Baxter, *Pioneers*, pp. 317 ff.; *House Journal*, June 18, 19, 22, 29, 1722.

When, however, the material damage inflicted by the Indians extended to the burning of the town of Brunswick, the Governor finally yielded to public pressure and declared war (July 25, 1722). The Indians in September also burned part of Georgetown. Afterwards, almost all the Norridgewoks departed for Quebec, with their allies, declaring that they must abandon their country, as they were not strong enough to hold it without help from the French. The retiring Indians had pressed Father Rasle to accompany them, but he refused, declaring that he did not fear the threats of the English, "who hate me without cause. I hold not my life dear unto myself, that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus." He waited for the long-expected French help, without which his own nearly thirty years' laboring with the Indians for their lands and their religion would be wiped out. But he waited in vain. The French King refused Vaudreuil permission to appear openly on the Indians' side.<sup>112</sup>

Nor was Massachusetts any more successful in obtaining help for its side. Its negotiations to draw the Iroquois into the war as allies proved fruitless.<sup>113</sup> Neither did it succeed with the neighboring governments, the refusal of Connecticut being especially pointed.<sup>114</sup>

Governor Shute himself, balked in many ways by the House with its continued invasion of the prerogative, departed from Boston secretly in late December, 1722, and left Lieutenant-Governor Dummer to deal with the crisis. In the course of the next two years, the latter had two great victories over the Indians. The first of these was at Penobscot, whose Indians had not been enthusiastic about the war.<sup>115</sup>

The Massachusetts forces, sent against them, arrived opposite Indian Island on March 9, 1723. They

<sup>112</sup> Penhallow, *Indian Wars*, p. 89; *House Journal*, Aug. 8, 1722; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 909; Father Rasle's letter, Oct. 15, 1722; also Feb. 14, 1723/24 (ms. in *Maine Hist. Soc. Arch.*, printed in 2 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 266).

<sup>113</sup> The tribes did, however, allow their members to volunteer for war service with Massachusetts, but only a few did so. *Mass. Arch.*, 29:103, 113, 139 ff.; *House Journal*, June 21, Aug. 22, 1723, *et seq.*

<sup>114</sup> *House Journal*, Aug. 15, 1722.

<sup>115</sup> Father Lauverjat to Father de la Chasse, cited in Wheeler, *History of Castine* (Bangor, 1875), p. 287.

found the fort deserted, and everything taken away, except a few papers. The fort was 70 yards in length and 50 in breadth, walled with stockades 14 feet in height, and enclosed 23 well-finished wigwams. On the south side was the chapel, in compass 60 feet by 30, handsomely and well finished, both within and on the outside. A little farther south was the dwelling place of the priest, which was very commodious. We set fire to them all and by sunrise the next morning, they were in ashes.<sup>116</sup>

The Penobscots were thus brought actively into the war, and in the spring of 1724 helped in the capture of nearly one hundred Englishmen and fourteen vessels loaded with salt and fish. There was then every appearance that the Norridgewoks and their allies would eventually tire out the English and oblige them to retire from the Kennebec when the English won their second great victory.<sup>117</sup>

This took place at Norridgewok itself, on August 12/23, 1724. Their forces surprised the village, overcame the defenders, and killed Father Rasle. They also plundered and burned the church.<sup>118</sup> It has been said that the

New England puritans thought it no sacrilege to take the plate from an idolatrous roman catholic church, which I suppose [says Hutchinson] was all the profaneness offered to the sacred vessels. There were some expressions of zeal against idolatry, in breaking the crucifixes and other imagery found there. . . . A zeal against a false religion destroyed the ornaments of [the Church].<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> The Colonel (Westbrook) figured that they had gone up the river about 32 miles. They had lost only 4 men on the trip, among others the Rev. Benjamin Gibson. (Westbrook to Dummer, March 23, 1722/23, used by Williamson, *Maine II*, 120 ff., printed in *Baxter Mss.*, X, 146.) It is considered that this village was Indian Old Town, but there is reason to believe that it was below the Falls.

<sup>117</sup> Vaudreuil to the Minister, Nov. 28, 1720, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 936; Lauerjat to Father de la Chasse, as above.

<sup>118</sup> *New England Courant*, Aug. 24, 1724; cf. Riley, *History of Catholicism*, p. 344.

<sup>119</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 237. "One of the Mohawks was sent, or of his own accord returned . . . and set fire to the wigwams and to the church," *ibid.* It is probably worth noting that among the Indians killed was Bomaseen.

*Note:* For several small errors in the French account which finally depended on Indian sources, cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 200 ff.



On August 22, 1724, Captain Harmon brought twenty-seven Indian scalps, together with that of Father Rasle, to the Massachusetts Council in Boston. Rewards were given out, including one hundred pounds for his service in the priest's "destruction." There was "great shouting and triumph" in Boston on this occasion, and few if any Bostonians had any disagreement with the sentiment of the crowd.<sup>120</sup>

Penhallow looked on Father Rasle as "a bloody incendiary and instrumental to most of the mischiefs that were done us, by preaching up the doctrine of meriting salvation by the destruction of heretics."<sup>121</sup> That verdict is based on entirely false premises. The truth is that, before the outbreak of war, Father Rasle had incited the Indians not to kill, and that, after the war began, the Indians were far less barbarous in their fighting than ever before in their history. Truth also reveals that what the priest preached was not the destruction of heretics, but the defense of the Catholic Indians' land, liberty, and freedom of worship against those who had robbed them of these precious rights.

Certain English historians have rightly credited the priest with many of the qualities that befit a saint; they praise his utter self-sacrifice in his chosen field of labor as Indian missionary; they even set up his mode of life as model for their own missionaries. On the other hand, they emphasize against him that he worked, not merely for God, but also for France; and that he showed a great personal love of controversy, unbounded pride, and a bitter contempt for the English. The facts set forth in this chapter furnish the means to judge whether what is charged against him should not rather be accounted unto his glory. His reputation may stand or fall on his own standard for himself. "My children are cheated, driven from their lands and their religion; shall I not counsel and defend them. [The English] shall sooner take away my life than hinder me."<sup>122</sup>

<sup>120</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 8:71, Aug. 22, 1724; *Baxter Mss.*, X, 215; *House Journal*, Dec. 23, 1724; Sewall, *Diary*.

<sup>121</sup> *Indian Wars*, p. 103.

<sup>122</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 198; C. Francis, *Life of Sebastian Rale*, in Sparks,

If he had not been killed, but had been taken prisoner, as the Government intended, he would have been brought to justice, not as an agent of the Canadian Government, but as a violator of that "good and wholesome law of this Province" according to which a man of his order was not permitted to reside "within this jurisdiction . . . without being . . . accounted an incendiary . . . of the public peace and safety and an enemy of the true Christian religion."

If the English had a right to the lands of the Indians, if they even had an undisputed sovereignty to the lands east of the Kennebec, by reason of these lands being included in Acadia "according to its ancient limits," the English authorities could have justly opposed and punished the Jesuit missionary for inciting the Indians to war.

Even in the disputed situation of the rights in question, if Massachusetts had negotiated some compromise on the matter of boundaries and definitely admitted that the Indians had some rights in sovereignty and title, the English attitude toward them and their priest might find a reasonable defense. If, furthermore, Massachusetts had been careful to regulate the truck trade and the rum traffic, it might have secured its very questionable land claims without war. And, finally, if it had refrained from its attempt to protestantize the Indians, it would certainly have avoided one great element of the Indians' and Father Rasle's resentment. But both right and equity were on the side of the Indians, and Father Rasle was their defender as well as their apostle.

By the same token, the facts give little reason to praise the actions of the French Government and its officials, who abandoned their Indian allies in this crucial period, just as they did the Acadians in the former decade.

*Library of American Biography*, new series, VII (Boston, 1845), 332; Parkman, *A Half Century of Conflict*, I, esp. 214 ff. But see Rev. Jacob Bailey, 2 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VII, 243. For a Catholic biography, see H. C. Schuyler, "A Typical Missionary," in *Records, Am. Cath. Hist. Soc.*, XVIII (1907), 121-154; and 306-353.

## CHAPTER VII

### FREEDOM OF RELIGION FOR THE INDIANS BUT NOT FOR THE IRISH (1725-1740)

FATHER RASLE'S DEATH was not in vain. It was immediately followed by Massachusetts' negotiations with the Indians for peace and by the Government's acknowledgment of religious freedom for the Indians. Massachusetts had many reasons to take these steps. It was war-weary and burdened with continual losses of human life and revenue.<sup>1</sup> Unaided by any of the neighboring colonies, except New Hampshire, its Government confessed that "unless God put a speedy end to the war it will inevitably ruin us."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, its citizens were constantly filing petitions for the redemption from the Indians of more than fifty of their own afflicted relatives and friends, who, it was specially feared, might become Catholics in the land of their captivity.<sup>3</sup>

The Government then decided on a peace offensive, under the guise of negotiations with the Canada Indians, for the redemption of captives. This program was put in operation late in November, 1724, and by the end of the next year a form of treaty had been concluded at Boston with the Penobscots, who on their side were also eager for peace. The intervening months had been marked by diverse retarding incidents, such as the Massachusetts forces' burning of the Penobscot village near Bangor, and an English scouting party's violation of an Indian flag of truce. The same period witnessed opposition to the peace by the Canadian Governor and by Father Lauerjat, who

<sup>1</sup> Burnet to Lords of Trade, Aug. 9, 1724, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVI, 315.

<sup>2</sup> Dummer to Council of Trade, March 31, 1725, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVI, 558; *Baxter Mss.*, X, 222, 223, 225, 227, 234, 235.

<sup>3</sup> Stevens to General Court, Nov. 11, 1724, *Mass. Arch.*, 52:258 (cited in Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 165).

undoubtedly feared Indian concessions to Massachusetts, especially in the matter of religion.<sup>4</sup>

The peace negotiations were, however, almost suspended by a circumstance, hardly believable and yet exceedingly grave.

When Chief Loron and the other Indian delegates returned to Penobscot with the signed treaty for ratification, and Father Lauverjat gave a translation of it to the Indians (for it was in English), Loron protested that the priest's reading of it disagreed with his understanding of the articles. Thereupon he had the priest write a letter for him to the Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts. In this he disowned several of the articles, denying "that he had come to make submission," or "that he had acknowledged himself a subject to the Crown of England," or that he had "agreed to join forces with Massachusetts against any Indians who refused to submit to the Treaty," and many other of the articles. "The disagreement I find between your writings and what I spoke to you viva voce stopps me and makes me suspend my negotiation till I have received your answer." He then asked the Governor to answer in French, "that it may be understood by many, and that the interpreter may not be taxed with interpreting in another sense."<sup>5</sup>

One of the Massachusetts officials at Agemogen Reach forwarded this letter to the Lieutenant-Governor, saying:

The Indians seem to be very well satisfied in yr Trade but (by persuasion of the Jesuit) disapprove of some Articles in their Submission, but Capt. Beane being present found yt he misinterpreted them; and he informed them of the true meaning thereof, wch was to their satisfaction.<sup>6</sup>

What satisfaction Loron received from the Lieutenant-Governor of Boston is not known, but it is known that the Penobscots ratified the peace. It is also certain that in doing so they

<sup>4</sup> *House Journal*, Nov. 11, Dec. 9, 15, 21, 23, 25; *Commissioners' Report* in Baxter, *Pioneers*, p. 350; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 947, 955; *Baxter Mss.*, X, 241, 180, 249, 322, 298; *Mass. Council Records*, Nov. 26, 1724, March 30, 1725; Williamson, *Maine*, II, 143 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:251, Jan. 25, 1726.

<sup>6</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, X, 239.



had obtained Massachusetts' acknowledgment of the freedom of religion.

The meeting for ratification was held July 30th to August 6, 1726, at Falmouth (Casco Bay), where the treaty was signed by representatives of the Penobscot, the St. John, and some Nova Scotia Indians. At this conference, Loron was chief speaker for the Indians and showed himself an earnest, high-minded, and withal quickwitted leader. It was probably he who arranged the matter of religion.

After the treaty, the Penobscots stood by it firmly, not only resisting the invitation of the Canada Indians to continue war, but taking steps to prevent those Indians from renewed attacks on the English. In his last, they were finally so successful that in the next summer delegates from St. Francis, Bécancourt, and Narantuak groups joined them in a new ratification of the peace.<sup>7</sup>

There is unimpeachable testimony that at the ratification, in 1727, the same kind of difference in the English text and the English interpretation was employed as Loron had previously complained about and the same kind of smoothing out of that difference.<sup>8</sup>

Father Lauverjat, after reporting these differences to his superior, Father de la Chasse, added that "the Abenakis told the English that they were making peace with them only on condition that they would not encroach on the Abenakis' lands, and that they reserved unto themselves, in case of rupture between France and England, the right always to adhere to the French. But these two conditions were merely verbal, and were not inserted in the Treaty." This would oblige him, he said, "always to manage these Indians, and not to refuse them what he might be justified in not allowing them, after having made their peace with the English, *contrary to his advice and without consulting him.*" After the Indians ratified the treaty, they

<sup>7</sup> *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 990; *Abstract of Despatches*, Oct. 20, 1727; *Corr. Gen.*, C 11, vol. 49, fol. 124; Rochemonteix, *Jésuites . . . XVIII<sup>me</sup> siècle*, II, 15, n.; *Mass. House Journal*, July 16, 1727.

<sup>8</sup> Gyles, *Memorial*, June 23, 1727, *Mass. Arch.*, 29; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 991; *Corr. Gen.*, C 11, vol. 49, fol. 124.

too wrote to the Governor of Canada (August 27, 1727) an assurance of their continued fidelity: "the English will never be able by all their presents and schemes to detach them from the French nor debauch them from their religion." <sup>9</sup>

Dummer's treaty was strictly a treaty of peace, amity, and trade between two independent peoples. Initiated by the English, it was not the sign of an Indian defeat. Whatever its words, the Indians did not acknowledge any subjection to the English, either in the past or for the future. Although they made some concessions regarding English settlements, they did not yield the sovereignty over their lands; finally, they did not allow the application of the Massachusetts anti-priest law to their territory.

## I

One of the points agreed on in Dummer's treaty, but not mentioned explicitly, was freedom of religion. This important element deserves detailed comment, although in general it followed the exact lines of what had happened after Queen Anne's War.

Up to the very moment of peace negotiations with the Indians, Massachusetts authorities continued to blame the war and its resultant damages to themselves, not on their own acts of aggression against Indian territory, but on the "conduct of the French Governor and the wicked practises of the Jesuits and other Romish priests." <sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the important place which Father Rasle's presence, activity, and death occupied in the war, and despite Massachusetts' protest to Canada and to England against the French missionaries' further presence in Maine, it is a fact

<sup>9</sup> *Abstract of Despatches*, Sept. 25, 1727, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11, vol. 49, fol. 124; cf. *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 136. See for details Loron's own explanation of the Peace in *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 966-967; see also the Canadian officials' similar report to the French Government, March 16, 1728, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 990.

<sup>10</sup> Dummer to Lords of Trade, March 31, 1725, and Address to King, June 25, 1725, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVI, nos. 558, 674, and 755.

that in the treaty of peace, Massachusetts acknowledged full religious freedom to the Indians. The text of the treaty indeed contains no mention of religion, but in view of other facts, such silence is best explained by Massachusetts' concessions on the point. For example, in the difficulties that arose later over the interpretation of the treaty, no mention was ever made of religious difficulties. Secondly, it was the Indians' constant tradition that the treaty provided for their continued freedom of religion.

On November 2, 1728, the Penobscot chiefs stated this explicitly to Governor Burnet, of Massachusetts, and made it the basis for a complaint. "*At the Ratification, Govr. Dummer and our tribes promist each other to mention all things that should happen on each side freely, and as to our Religions, we were not to interrupt one the other in the Injoyment of itt.*"<sup>11</sup>

This understanding was also accepted by Massachusetts. When, a few years after the treaty, Governor Belcher spoke to the Indians (July, 1732) about religion, Loron said, "as to Prayers, it was mentioned *in the Treaty* that there should be no dispute about Religion"; and Belcher replied, "I did not mention the matter of religion to make any Jar between us, but offered it as an Instance of my brotherly love."<sup>12</sup>

Finally, it is a fact, clearly indicative of the religious situation, that after the treaty, not only did the Penobscots keep their priest, but also the Norridgewoks sought and obtained a priest from Canada.

This same religious freedom was granted to the Indians by the Government of Nova Scotia, which also entered into the negotiations, lest "by a separate peace, we . . . be left alone to the fury of their insults." Unlike Massachusetts, however, Nova Scotia made its grant of religious freedom explicit,<sup>13</sup> and applied it not only to the Nova Scotia Indians proper, but also to those of the St. John River and the Penobscots, over whom Nova Scotia still claimed jurisdiction.

<sup>11</sup> Gyles to Burnet, *Mass. Arch.*, 31:166; cf. *Baxter Mss.*, X, 430.

<sup>12</sup> See note 42 *infra*.

<sup>13</sup> Sept. 5, 1725, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVI, no. 718; *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 955; *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVIII, nos. 268, II.

Massachusetts' promise of freedom of religion applied even to the Norridgewoks. The members of this group, immediately after ratifying the peace at Casco Bay (1727), sought to reëstablish themselves in their former village, and asked the Canadian officials for a missionary, "to preserve themselves in the Catholic faith" (October 28, 1727).

The petition went through the Jesuit fathers and the Canadian officials, who, on October 28, 1727, explained to their Home Government that the Jesuits would furnish the missionary if the King, "having regard to the losses those Indians have suffered on the occasion of Father Rasle's [death], will be pleased to supply them with a chalice, a ciborium, an ostensorium, and other church ornaments, and with furniture for the Missionary's house, which they lost there." His Majesty consented,<sup>14</sup> and by October 1, 1728, the Jesuit Father Jacques Syresme had already set out to Norridgewok as missionary.<sup>15</sup>

Father Syresme, born October 22, 1695, had entered the Society of Jesus at Paris when he was not quite seventeen years old and was ordained there in 1728. That very year he went back to Quebec where he had already spent six years as a teacher, and was at once appointed to Norridgewok.<sup>16</sup>

When the new missionary arrived there, he found only six cabins of Indians, whose inhabitants had been cared for by Father Lauverjat during the interim. But the priest's coming and the spread of the news of peace soon brought to the ancient town many more, not only those who were there in recent times, but some who had left many years before. It even appeared that others also wished to follow their example. Attracted by the advantages of the trade and the promises of the English, and knowing now that they could also have a priest there, they were set on emigrating from Canada to Maine. In 1729, when Father Syresme went back from Norridgewok to Quebec, the French officials, much concerned at this turn of events, were unwilling to allow his continuation at Norridgewok, and indeed gave their

<sup>14</sup> *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 994 and 1002.

<sup>15</sup> *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C II, vol. 50, fol. 23 (Despatches, April 30, 1729).

<sup>16</sup> *Rochemonteix, Jésuites . . . au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, II, 17 n.



permission for it only after the Canada Indians reluctantly agreed not to emigrate. By that time the Kennebecs had made altogether five journeys to Quebec to get the priest, and they vividly pictured the probable loss of faith to which they would be exposed without his presence.<sup>17</sup>

## II

In allowing freedom of religion to the Abenakis, Massachusetts did not intend to give Jesuit missionaries an exclusive field of operations. Rather did it plan to renew the Protestant competition, already attempted in the preceding periods. On December 7, 1726, after the completion of the peace negotiations, the Lieutenant-Governor suggested to the Legislature to make suitable provision for the support and encouragement of a missionary for that important service, saying that he had, after some difficulty, obtained a person in every way qualified for it. The House put off the consideration of the suggestion until the May session, and then the plan was evolved of "sending down to the Truck houses at Richmond and Georges River, to be employed as chaplains there, two prudent and discreet persons of good learning, exemplary and very circumspect lives and conversation." They were to obtain the knowledge of the language and of the persons of the Indians and become "the better prepared to accompany those Indians sometimes into the woods and at length . . . go with them to their . . . headquarters and there spend their time in a more close and diligent application to instruct both the children and the grown persons in . . . our Holy Religion . . ."

This plan was accepted by the Council, but not by the House, until its last part, about going with the Indians on their hunts and residing with them in their settlements, was dropped. Then the proposal was put through. Moses Hale and John Sumner, who had been recommended for the positions, and who were young Harvard graduates, were allowed one hundred pounds

<sup>17</sup> Beauharnois to the Minister, Oct. 25, 1729, *New York Col. Docs.*, IX, 1014; cf. also Nov. 6, 1730, in *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 152.

each a year. They did not stay very long at their posts, and little is heard of their work there or of its success.<sup>18</sup>

### III

The Government also took steps to insure the Indian trade. For example, it dismissed two truckmasters of whom the Indians complained for overreaching them in trade.<sup>19</sup> It also showed itself eager to prevent any repetition of the land scandals of the previous régime. On June 21, 1727, for example, the House consented to the setting up of a "Com'tee on English Claims or Titles to the Eastern Parts, *provided* that none of the said committee are interested in any Lands to the eastward of North Yarmouth in Casco Bay."<sup>20</sup>

Settlement of lands east of the Kennebec was, however, soon taken out of the hands of the Massachusetts Government<sup>21</sup> in favor of the Crown. The case against Massachusetts claims was pushed by the same Thomas Coram who had sought a grant in Maine before the war, and who used the same arguments in 1729 as he had used before.<sup>22</sup> A similar attempt was being made at the same time by a certain David Dunbar, a native of Ireland, who had succeeded Colonel Bridger in the post of royal surveyor here. In early 1728, Dunbar proposed to settle the lands east of Kennebec with Protestant Irish families then in New England and about five hundred Palatine families from Germany.<sup>23</sup> His proposal was accepted.

Dunbar landed in Boston on the 23rd day of September, 1729. Within two weeks, according to his own testimony:

A great many men of those who lately came from Ireland as well as some English and Irish families many years settled

<sup>18</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 31:144; *Mass. Court Records*, 13:392, 417, 489, 490; *House Journal*, Jan. 3, 1727-1728; Sibley, *Harvard Graduates*, VI (Boston, 1942), 648; *Acts and Resolves*, XI, 252, 261; Belcher to Gyles, Feb. 25, 1731-1732, *Belcher Papers* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>19</sup> Oct. 26, 1727, *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVIII, no. 768; *Mass. Court Records*, 13:489, 490.

<sup>20</sup> *House Journal*.

<sup>21</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, XXXVI, no. 755, Oct. 8, 1725.

<sup>22</sup> Nov. 28, 1729, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 437.

<sup>23</sup> Lords of Trade to Privy Council, May 14, 1728; cf. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 68.

here, & likewise many natives of this Country who are uneasy under this form of government, applyed [to him to settle in his new province]. The greatest part of those who lately came from Ireland had removed themselves to Pensilvania, upon the ill-treatment they received here, where a very numerous Mobb threatened and insulted them as foreigners.<sup>24</sup>

On October 20, 1729, Dunbar landed at Pemaquid in the new Province with about one hundred men. Two other vessels followed shortly, bringing emigrants, mostly from Ireland.<sup>25</sup> In June, 1732, it was reported to the French Government that Dunbar had a company of one hundred men at his fort, and nearly three hundred Irish families under his control.<sup>26</sup>

For many reasons, Dunbar had difficulties in Boston,<sup>27</sup> and after three years, the Crown revoked his commission, and allowed Massachusetts' charter rights up to the Ste. Croix. The decision was made known here in February, 1732/33.<sup>28 29</sup>

One of Dunbar's difficulties would, it was thought, be the opposition of the Indians and of the French, who would not welcome "the settling this continent with a Protestant people."<sup>30</sup> Although Dunbar hoped that the very strength of his settlement would in a few years oblige the Indians to quit the country, because the settlements would drive all the hunting far from them, he did not tell that to the Indians. On the contrary, by emphasizing his intention to keep west of St. George's, Dunbar had no trouble with either Indians or French, especially after the French Governor at Quebec advised the Indians "to live well with the English."<sup>31</sup>

That advice must have come from Father Lauerjat, who nevertheless feared that the English would later take possession of the Penobscot country, believing, as he did, that the

<sup>24</sup> Dunbar to Lords of Trade, Oct. 9, 1729, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 440.

<sup>25</sup> Dunbar to Newcastle, Dec. 10, 1729, *Cal. State Papers*, XL, no. 1019; cf. also *New Eng. Weekly Journal*, March 30, 1730; *News-Letter*, March 4, 1731.

<sup>26</sup> May, 1733, Minister to Beauharnois. <sup>27</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, X, 443.

<sup>28</sup> Dunbar to Popple, Dec. 10, 1729; *Cal. State Papers*, XL, no. 1018; *Baxter Mss.*, X, 440.

<sup>29</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 169 ff. Much of the literature on this is printed in *Baxter-Mss.*, X and XI.

<sup>30</sup> Gyles to Dunbar, Nov. 14, 1729, *Baxter Mss.*, X, 445.

<sup>31</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, X, 446, 449; XI, 5.

English would win the Indians over "by presents or by promises, which they will not keep if they once become the masters."<sup>32</sup> Dunbar had probably sought his help, as he certainly sought Father Syresme's influence to secure the Kennebec Indians' friendship for the new settlement. "Having heard that the priest was an Irish — or Scotchman," Dunbar wrote to him in English, but received his answer in Latin and French, because, the priest declared, he "could not make a precise answer in English." The answer itself was courteous and friendly.<sup>33</sup>

Dunbar also made some tempting offers to the St.-Castins, and thereby rendered the Penobscot missionary's work more difficult than it had been.<sup>34</sup> The priest, who was much dissatisfied with these influential members of the tribe, criticized them not only for their pro-English sentiments, but for their scandalous conduct. He charged them with drunkenness, selling liquor in the village, and cheating in weights and measures. The French officials both in Paris and Quebec advised caution and warnings, rather than drastic action, and even had the priest changed temporarily, rather than risk the displeasure of the St.-Castins. Finally they had Father Lauverjat withdrawn entirely from Penobscot, and left that village without a resident missionary. The Quebec Governor explained to the French Court that he was "a man of very good character and great zeal, and opposed the faults against religion which the St.-Castins and the others frequently fall into." One gathers the impression that the priest was mostly interested in virtue, and that the French officials feared to lose the good pleasure of the St.-Castins.

But before the final dénouement in this case, the missionary had to deal with Dunbar's opponent and successor, Governor Belcher, of Massachusetts.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Beauharnois to the Minister, *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11, vol. 52, fol. 198; Minister to Beauharnois, *Arch. Col.*, B, vol. 55, fol. 496½; *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 154; Le Blant, *St. Castin*, p. 102.

<sup>33</sup> Dunbar to Popple, *Nova Scotia Papers*, P.R.O., VI, D 14; cf. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 76.

<sup>34</sup> Le Blant, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>35</sup> Wheeler, *History of Castine* . . . (Bangor, 1875), pp. 287 ff.; *Arch. Col.*, B, vol. 53, fol. 465; C 11 A, vol. 51, fol. 78; vol. 52, fol. 198; vol. 57, fol. 99; vol. 59, fol. 57.



## IV

Governor Belcher arrived in Boston on August 8, 1730. He remained as Governor until 1740, and during the whole decade had a very hard time of it. Not the least of his trouble came from affairs which touched the Indians.

He made contact with these people immediately, by sending an official commission to them (October 29, 1730). Perhaps as a result of this, he received complaints from "the Popish missionaries among the Indians, that while they are teaching these poor people virtue and religion, we [English] are destroying their souls and bodies with the plague of Rum." The Governor tried to remedy the evil, both then and throughout his rule.<sup>36</sup>

He also tried from the beginning to put new spirit into the Protestant program of teaching religion to the Indians. The London Corporation for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians of America wished to support a minister and schoolmaster among the Indians, if the Legislature would grant a good plot of land for an Indian township. The Governor recommended the project to the General Court, which, however, delayed specific action until the Governor should have an interview with the Indians.<sup>37</sup>

This interview did not take place, however, until over a year later. Meanwhile, the Governor was also in contact with the Scotch Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and opened up still another project. This society had offered to pay for three missionaries whom the Governor might procure to go among the Indians.<sup>38</sup>

By the beginning of 1732, the Governor had obtained two such missionaries, whom he sent one to Richmond Fort on the Kennebec and the other to the fort on St. George's River.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XV (1898), 134.

<sup>37</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 14:446; 15:286, 296; *House Journal*, 9:383, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. ed.*

<sup>38</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 13, 1733.

<sup>39</sup> Belcher to Heath, Feb. 25, 1731/32, *Belcher Papers*; cf. *Mass. Court Records*, 14:429; 15:254.

The Legislature supported the project by allowing a salary of one hundred pounds a year for five years, to three chaplains; and this time, benefiting by past experience, added a bonus of a hundred pounds if any of the ministers appointed continued five years in the work.<sup>40</sup>

Governor Belcher, thus prepared with religious help and with good hopes of success against Dunbar, held his first solemn meeting with the Indians at Falmouth, in July, 1732. At the parley the latter were again represented by Loron, and by Wiwurna, the Norridgewok Sachem.

On one point everyone interested in the conference was agreed. That was the sale of rum. Father Lauverjat had written about it to the Governor, who in turn brought it up at the conference, and promised his prudent regulation of the trade.<sup>41</sup>

In the matter of lands, which was naturally the important part of the conference, the Massachusetts Governor like his predecessors took the position that all the lands in New England belonged to the King, as sovereign. The Indians in reply served notice that they had not receded from their former stand, but that they did not wish to make it a *casus belli*. Thus, technically, the positions of the two parties to the great controversy remained unchanged.

A large part of the conference was taken up with religion. On this subject, Governor Belcher spoke at length, sometimes vehemently, and always with the refrain: *it will cost you nothing*. Having announced the settlement of a minister at St. George's and the intended settling of another at Richmond, he said:

They will be always ready to instruct you in the principles of the Christian Religion and teach your children to read and write, *which shall be without any cost to you*. If you are willing to send your children to Boston, they shall be brought up to learning at the College, that so they may officiate as Fathers among you and teach you the true Religion, and their education *shall cost you nothing*. . . . If you have a mind to under-

<sup>40</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 15:292; *Acts and Resolves*, XI, 669, chap. 48.

<sup>41</sup> Belcher to Father Lauverjat, July 31, 1732, in *Belcher Papers*.

stand the true English Religion, *it shall cost you nothing*; and when you understand it, you will certainly know that you are cheated when your sins are pretended to be pardon'd for skins. This is all a Cheat and Deceit. None can pardon sins but Jesus Christ; and He does it freely, without money and without price. All that the Priests make you pay, they put in their own Pockets. . . .

The Indian speaker prefaced his reply by the statement, "As to Prayers, it was mentioned in the Treaty, that there should be no dispute about religion." He then continued with a polite refusal of the Governor's offers.

Governor Belcher later returned to the subject of religion, but spoke with much less passion than before, saying that he

did not mention the matter of religion to make any jar between us, but offered it as an instance of my brotherly love; and because I am perfectly satisfied it is the best way to your interest in this world and the world to come. God has given you reason, to examine into the matter of religion. It will do you no hurt to examine into the English Religion, for then you can chuse that which you shall judge to be best. The Government is willing to instruct you on free cost. I have nothing to do with the foreign nations; you have said you are free men, and you are my Brethren. When you received the Popish Priest, it was at your own election.

The rest of the conference had to do with trade, except in one point. On July 29th, the Norridgewok chief said, "There were formerly several things taken from the Jesuits at Norridgewock; which if they were brought again to Richmond, we should be glad to pay for them, especially a Writing we saw at North Yarmouth." This was clearly a reference to the altar utensils and to some of Father Rasle's compositions. When the Governor asked, "In whose hands was it," Toxous answered, "One Drinkwater's." The Governor replied:

. . . It is a great while since the affair happened at Norridgewock, and I should be glad you had mentioned the matter before, and then it would have been easier to have recovered those things than now. Major Moulton is here, who can tell

you that the plunder taken at Norridgewock was divided among the soldiers: Capt. Parker has got the Writing you mention and will be ready to deliver it upon your paying the price of it. . . .<sup>42</sup>

Shortly after the Governor's return to Boston, he summed up this religious policy in a letter to a friend: "We are resolved (by the help of God) to do everything in our power for delivering these poor wretches from the wicked, ridiculous superstition and idolatry of the Church of Rome."<sup>43</sup> In his report to the Legislature about his parley with the Indians, he added: "The Kennebec country is worthy of all the support — this Government can possibly give for bringing forward the settlement thereof. . . . I think it a point of wisdom to encourage good Protestants of all Nations and Denominations to come and dwell among us. . . ." The House agreed with the Governor about encouraging the immigration of the Protestants, but was noncommittal on the request for an Indian township grant.<sup>44</sup>

The three minister-missionaries (Messrs. Seccomb at George's, Parker at Richmond, and Hinsdell at Fort Dummer at Northfield) were duly ordained, and continued in their work with energy and ability, and with help from even some Protestants in Britain, but with little success.<sup>45</sup> Rev. Mr. Seccomb's work is best known, partly from a report by him, one section of which may be cited.

As to religion [he wrote] these Indians are extremely Frenchify'd, having for above thirty years had Jesuits among them, who have brought them to be strenuous biggots to the church of Rome. I have seen two of these Jesuits, and one of them is a subtle old Gentleman, very warm and zealous in his disputations, which are frequent, either verbal or in writing; when he keeps to the Bible, he never gets the better of me; but when

<sup>42</sup> *Conference of Gov. Belcher with the Eastern Indians* . . . (Boston, 1732), in *Mass. Hist. Soc.* I have learned nothing more of this transaction.

<sup>43</sup> *Belcher Papers*, I, 188.

<sup>44</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 15:298; *House Journal*, Nov. 17, 1732.

<sup>45</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 17, 1733; Belcher to Grant, May 21, 1733, *Belcher Papers*, I, 296; *Colman Papers* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).



he comes to Fathers and Councils, I am at a loss, for he will not acknowledge our translations, and the originals are not to be purchased in this country. . . .<sup>46</sup>

On June 27, 1734, he wrote to Rev. Mr. Colman:

Mr. Lauverjat follows me with continual essays to make a Pervert of me. I have sent the most plausible of them, in the same foul Condition I receiv'd them; not knowing but that some Gent'n might have the Curiosity to peruse it, if its sordidness should not render it nauseous at first View. . . .<sup>47</sup>

Part of that essay runs thus:

April 12, 1734.

Pax Christi.

Sir and Very dear Son:

Will you please see that the letter which I send you herewith is delivered to the person to whom it is addressed? At the same time, accept my thanks for your care in forwarding the other letters which I sent you: I hope that when you receive their replies, you will take care that they be sent to me.

I am very sorry that when I was with you, I did not open the letters and have you read them, for you surely would have seen both how well founded is the church's infallibility and how solidly she answers all the objections made against it. You would also have noted with what burning charity she works for the salvation of souls.

The minister had evidently addressed the priest as Father, because the priest went on:

Now I would like to tell you how acceptable and pleasing it is to me to have you call me Father, and call yourself Son. What indeed could be more pleasing to me than to be called Father by so talented and so modest a youth. . . . But by the use of this name father, you compel me, to work unceasingly, until I have brought you to a second birth in Christ and His Church. . . . For I shall always feel a great sadness, Son, while I see you subject to the malediction: If he will not hear the

<sup>46</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, April 17, 1735. Mr. Seccomb's letter is dated Sept. 19, 1734.

<sup>47</sup> *Colman Papers* (Mass. Hist. Soc.).

Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican (Matt. 18:17).

The priest, then, excusing himself for the soiled paper, starts his long disquisition on the Visibility, the Perpetuity, and the Infallibility of the Church founded by Christ, and the proof that the Roman Catholic Church is that Church.

In conclusion, he prays the *Father Almighty* to enlighten the young minister, and exhorts the latter to obey the divine inspiration "and return to the Mother Church from which *your Fathers* have separated you." The priest then added a special appeal to "all those Angli, in whose neighborhood I live."

O dearest and most beloved of brothers, once the most observant adherents of the Catholic religion and its most valiant defenders! Who will grant me [the boon] of dying for [you] if only you can return to your Mother, from whom you were torn and separated by deceiving seducers. . . . Why are you averse from her who gave you birth unto Christ? why do you flee from her? why do you think ill of her? Come close, look at her from near to! She is not what those seducers pictured her to you. She is not a worshipper of idols, but of the one God; she is not a heresy but the exterminator of heresies; she is not a stepmother, but an honored and honorable mother; her wish is not to enslave you, but to insure your being saved . . . to give birth to you again in Christ Jesus.

These things I say to all the English, but especially to you (my son) whom I love in the bowels of Christ, praying that you may be filled with the recognition (of His name and the enjoyment of His) redemption.<sup>48</sup>

As a result of Seccomb's letters and interest in the new mission in general, efforts were made in England to provide books "for the better enabling of these young Davids . . . to beat down the old Goliath's French Jesuits." Among the books, besides the Bible, was mentioned one containing "Fifteen Sermons, preaching and to be preached against Popery by Dissenting Ministers of this city [London]." <sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Coram to Colman, Feb. 13, 1734/35, and April 10, 1735; E. Burton, *Life of Bishop Challoner* (Longmans, 1909), I, 95.

Nevertheless, by June, 1736, Mr. Colman was thinking of removing Mr. Seccomb from his station. He was "discouraged from hoping for any success among the Popish clans or tribes," and planned to concentrate on the "Western Indians."<sup>50</sup> In 1737, all the three missionaries hired by Governor Belcher and Mr. Colman "were dismissed on account of their want of success, and of their declining to live among the Indians."<sup>51</sup> They had just filled out their five years.

Meanwhile, the certainty of Dunbar's defeat and the presence of the Protestant minister gave occasion for Belcher to visit the Penobscots in August, 1734. There he made a final play for Penobscot allegiance. He made offers to them of fifteen commissions and pensions. Some of the pensions were for seven years; and the commissions were for colonels, majors, and captains. The Governor's idea was that "this, and the great benefit they reap from the trade, will keep 'em steady."<sup>52</sup>

He told Captain Gyles to

deliver them with the Gov't's hearty good will and to tell [the Indians] I expect they should be ready with the brave men under their command to show their duty and loyalty to the great King George on all occasions. I observe [he went on], they are some of 'em lately returned from Canada with a small present and a blanket full of compliments, but you may tell 'em Govr. Belcher's friendship carries with it something substantial.<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, when the French Governor expressed his opposition to the commissions, only three Penobscots, Espequid (Lieutenant-Governor), Lewis, and Nimend accepted them.<sup>54</sup>

Belcher's resentful disappointment at the Penobscots' atti-

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Watts to Colman, Sept. 13, 1736, and Coram to Colman, Oct. 8, 1736; cf. also J. Watts to Colman, Feb. 28, 1736/37, and Sept. 22, 1738, *Colman Papers*.

<sup>51</sup> *An Account of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge* (Edinburgh, 1774), pp. 14 ff.

<sup>52</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, July 18, and Aug. 1, 1734; Beauharnois to the Minister, Oct. 7, 1734, in *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 61, fol. 65.

<sup>53</sup> Belcher to Gyles, Nov. 19, 1734; to Lt.-Gov. Armstrong, Nov. 28, 1734, *Belcher Papers*; see also *Baxter Mss.*, XI, 141, 143.

<sup>54</sup> Beauharnois to the Minister, Oct. 13, 1735, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 63, fol. 74 ff.

tude was evident in his next letter to Gyles. He assured those who had accepted the commissions that "they shall punctually receive their pay." Then he continued:

Return me per bearer every commission that is not delivered out, and tell Loron and the others that it was a great honour and favour done them to give them the offer of the King's Commission and pay, and that I will not wait on any of their consultations in the matter, but if they will be imposed on and deluded by the French, they may repent of their folly when too late. Tell them I sent 'em a Minister to your fort and that I am sorry to hear they seldom attend upon his praying and preaching, who would gladly lead them and their children in the true way to be happy here and hereafter, and how to have their sins pardoned without paying for it, in Skins or anything else.<sup>55</sup>

This was the high point of Belcher's influence with the Penobscots.

It happened that just at the time of this English attempt at Penobscot, Father Lauverjat was removed by his superiors to a different mission. What motivated the change is not known, but it may well have been the priest's continued difficulties with the St.-Castin brothers.<sup>56</sup> The change probably took place not later than the spring of 1735. In the autumn Father Lauverjat was at Bécancourt, where he signed the baptismal register first on October 23, 1735, and then continuously until September 1, 1737. From 1738 to 1740, he is said to have been stationed at Bastiscan. He may well have been the author of a letter, written by a French missionary from Quebec some years later, in which the passage occurs: "These New England Puritans have their Religion so much at heart that to destroy our holy Catholic Church is their glory. They seem to be united as one man against us *except a number of Scotch and Irish that fled over to New England.*"<sup>57</sup> What missionary replaced him

<sup>55</sup> Belcher to Gyles, Feb. 28, 1734/35, *Belcher Papers*.

<sup>56</sup> Minister to Father de Lauzon, April 24, 1735, in *Arch. Col.*, B, vol. 63, fol. 494<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

<sup>57</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VI (1889), 94. Father Lauverjat did not return to Maine for some years.



is not known. Whoever he was, he remained apparently for only one year, because in 1736-1737, Father Syresme was caring for the Penobscots, while they were awaiting the arrival of another Jesuit.

## V

When Dunbar lost his British concession, the Waldo interests, with which Elisha Cooke was associated, took up the same work under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. Waldo planned to continue both the Irish and the German Palatinate immigration inaugurated by Dunbar. But he at once came into conflict with Governor Belcher, apparently because of his association with Cooke, with whom Belcher, like Shute previously, was having trouble. During this conflict the person of Father Syresme, the Jesuit missionary of the Norridgewoks, stands out both prominently and with undoubted credit.

The first hint of difference between Belcher and Waldo appears in April, 1735, when the former refused government assistance to Waldo in the latter's dealings with the Penobscots.<sup>58</sup> Waldo had several interviews with the Indians and apparently satisfied them, for during some time afterwards, "the Tribe continued unanimous and willing ye settlement should be carried on according to the terms agreed on."

Suddenly, in the spring of 1736, there was a change in the sentiment of the Indians, who took their case against Waldo to the Legislature, and strangely enough received not only support for their stand, but also presents worth one hundred pounds.<sup>59</sup> Father Syresme, who was considered "a man of candour and probity" by the Presbyterian minister of Brunswick, was asked by Waldo for information. The priest, "with his usual freedom and good humor," gave an explanation which laid the blame upon Governor Belcher himself, who had been aided in the matter by Captain Gyles and the Rev. Mr. Sec-

<sup>58</sup> Belcher to Gyles, April 14, 1735, *Belcher Papers*.

<sup>59</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 190-191. Waldo's own petition to have some of the tribe appear and testify on the titles was refused. Cf. Waldo's *Defence of the Title . . . of . . . John Everett . . .* (Boston, 1736; copy in Widener Library.)

comb. Gyles had "incensed the Indians by telling them, if they sate still and permitted Mr. Waldo to proceed, he soon would ruin their interest and usurp all their land and plant it with Irish, which was his chief view and intention." Gyles had then advised the excited natives to complain to the Governor, and Rev. Mr. Seccomb had written the Indians' letter to the Governor. The priest in his turn gave warning to Waldo about the Indians' plan to destroy some of Waldo's houses, and also advised the landowner how to proceed safely and peaceably with the tribe.<sup>60</sup>

Governor Belcher and Waldo brought their rival stories to the British Government.<sup>61</sup> Belcher's defense was that "Waldo did in a manner hire the Jesuit to be his tool"; that Waldo "will not be able to produce one line under my hand to any person whomsoever to discourage the people that were settling there," and that Belcher had exercised "a constant tender care of those settlements." The differences between the Governor and the land company no longer affect this story; but in so far as they have been detailed, they arouse the interesting reflection that a Governor of Massachusetts is accused by a Jesuit of exactly what a previous Governor had charged against a previous Jesuit. That reflection might well include the favorable personal reactions made by both those Jesuits on some of the non-Catholic ministers of that day, and the kindly treatment received by them, especially when ill, from the same non-Catholics.

## VI

During the decade between 1730 and 1740, a large number of immigrants from Ireland came to New England. Besides those who had accepted Dunbar's invitation, there was another large stream under Waldo. A cursory search in the files of the *New England Weekly Journal* and the *Boston News-Letter*, as well as of the Boston City Documents, reveals, for example, the

<sup>60</sup> Declaration of Rev. Robert Rutherford, April 10, 1738, in *Knox Papers* (Mass. Hist. Soc.); Cutter's Declaration, Dec. 3, 1737, *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> See *Belcher Papers*, April 4, May 20, 1740.

arrival, October 1, 1733, of Captain Roberts from Dublin with one hundred passengers, and August 15, 1734, the arrival at Marblehead of a vessel from Ireland with a great number of passengers.

Waldo's real immigrants came in 1736 and 1737. In the summer of the former year, he spoke of "having engaged three ships to bring a great number of Irish Protestants to settle" here.<sup>62</sup> As a matter of fact, three ships did arrive in Boston that fall, one in September, the other two in November, carrying fifteen, thirty-seven, and forty-three passengers from Ireland, respectively.<sup>63</sup> In 1737, six other ships arrived, one of them carrying at least two hundred Irish. These were from Kinsale and Cork.<sup>64</sup> Another brought four hundred,<sup>65</sup> still another one hundred and fifty,<sup>66</sup> and another one hundred and sixty-two.<sup>67</sup> In 1738 there is reference to another ship bringing fifty-two, and in 1739, to still another bringing forty-six.<sup>68</sup> Shortly afterwards this stream of immigration ceased for a decade.

This Waldo development and other causes affected Boston, also. Certainly Boston manifested a marked increase of Irish residents in the decade from 1730 to 1740. Evidence gleaned from Boston marriage records shows that, whereas in the earliest decade of the century, seventeen Irish names occurred, and in the second and third decades forty such names in each, the records of 1730 to 1740 contain eighty-five.<sup>69</sup> Similar results are obtained from an examination of "Death" and "Missing" notices in the newspapers, and in some Boston City Documents.<sup>70</sup>

Besides direct immigration from Ireland, there was the indirect immigration from other places in America. For example,

<sup>62</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XI, 169.

<sup>63</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 3, 9, and 12.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 84; *New England Weekly Journal*, Aug. 16, 23, 1737.

<sup>65</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 8, 1737; *Report, Record Commission*, *loc. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 148, 314, 316.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, XXXVIII; cf. George F. Donovan, *The Pre-Revolutionary Irish in Mass.* (St. Louis University, 1931), esp. pp. 24, 25, 44; see also his notes on the town in Essex County.

<sup>70</sup> *N.E. Courant*, *N.E. Weekly Journal*, *Boston News-Letter*.

a list of strangers "warned to depart . . . from Boston" in 1727 included "John White, an Irishman from Dedham; Robert Phenne [Feeney], an Irishman from Wells [Maine]; Wm. Nugle [Nagle], an Irishman from Philadelphia; Robert Sterling, an Irishman from Rutland [Massachusetts]; James Drawley, an Irishman from Lisbon," and "Joseph Doyle from Rhode Island."<sup>71</sup>

Although some of the Boston Irish with South Ireland names are found among the business men of the town, the greatest number by far were laborers. A high percentage of the "Porters licensed to carry Goods, Wares and Merchandise" was, for example, made up of Irish persons, such as John Whaland, Paul Bryan, Thomas O'Bryan, Peter Curtice, John Keefe, Thomas Pheland, Jona Neley, James Collins, Edward Kelly, and Patrick Bourke. Among those who went surety for some of those were Timothy Murfey and Martin Kelly.<sup>72</sup>

It was in this period (1737) that other Irish Bostonians, with North Ireland names, founded the well-known Irish Charitable Society.

It was to be expected that not a few among the arriving Irish were Catholics; for although the emigration from Ireland was directly occasioned by the English laws against Irish trade and industry, it was motivated also by economic ruin and famine. The latter made little or no distinction between Presbyterians and Papists. The presence here of some "Papists" had already been noted in 1727, when the Anglican minister, Rev. Dr. Cutler, reported that there were Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers in Boston, "and I fear the principles of Deism, Arianism, and Popery are privately instilled into some. . . ." <sup>73</sup>

One incident in the Dunbar-Belcher controversy also indicates the probable presence in this city of many French and some Irish Catholics. Dunbar, in a complaint written from Boston to the Council of Trade (August 19, 1730), tells of

<sup>71</sup> *Journal, Irish Am. Hist. Soc.*, XVIII (1919).

<sup>72</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 316, 327, 330, 331.

<sup>73</sup> W. Perry, *Historical Collections* (Hartford, 1870-1878), III, 230.



large ships built here for the "French and Spaniards . . . and purchased with French rum and molasses. . . . They sail hence with an English or Irish master (a papist) and English mariners . . . to Cape Breton, but mostly to the French and Spanish West Indies. . . ." <sup>74</sup> His brother, Jeremiah Dunbar, giving testimony before the Lords of Trade on January 5, 1731, <sup>75</sup> about this illegal traffic said that there were "1000 [*sic*] Frenchmen at Boston engaged in it."

Undoubtedly the Home Government sent some observations to Belcher on this point, because on August 10, 1731, he issued a proclamation that covered the matter, especially recalling the Massachusetts law of 1692, which forbade the residence here of unlicensed French nationals. Among such a large number of French, there were assuredly many Catholics. <sup>76</sup>

As these Catholics, whether French or Irish, had no priest to perform religious services for them, their being Catholics was hardly noticed. However, when in the early part of 1731/32, a rumor arose that there was a priest in Boston, the authorities took swift action. The rumor ran that the Papists were to have Mass said on Friday, March 17th, it "being what they call St. Patrick's Day." This rumor was reported to the (town?) authorities a few days before the feast by some anonymous person either appointed to inquire into it or spontaneously assuming the part of informer. His report read:

Gentlemen: I have given some diligence to inquire into ye number: & proceedings of Papists reciding in this town & as fare as I can att present recollect, I have here set down their names & number.

in ye bottom of ye Comons. Thos. Poor his Sister & man servt 3

Rouland Poor & his man servt a Carter 2

Jams & Jon Gwinn Labourers 2

two Jon Flings Porters 2

Jon Karni man servt wt Andrew Simson Labourer 1

Maddin ye Currier wt some more in his Family 1

Cramsi & his wife 2 living in ye house wth Symson aforesd

<sup>74</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, X, 37.      <sup>75</sup> *Palfrey Papers* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>76</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XV (1898), 135.

two men servts wt Jonson ye Butcher Kings Street 2

A man servt wt McDonald Ropemaker 1

a man servt wt Thornton 1

a man servt wth Jervis Bethel N. End. 1

Widdow Jameson a washerwoman 1

MccSuaden a Shoomaker nigh water Street 1

Mason a Staymaker 1

Jon Kirnan & his wife S. End.

Freeman who has ye wind-mill N-End. 1

Robt Poor labourer 1

Philip Oconer Porter formerly servtman to Major Maskareen  
Fitch-Patrick. 1/ye number at present wh occur are 25.

There are many Seurvants, Porters, Carters, &c. whose names at present don't occur. all these are pretended Chh. men — Moreover Im credibly inform'd yt they-re to have Mass said on Friday next (being what they call St. Patrick's Day) it will be Either in Thos. Poor's in ye Commons or Maddins. wherefore we Conclud it might be proper to set a private guard, nigh said houses. & Endeavor to apprehend ye whole body of 'em all.

As a result of this, and perhaps other reports, Governor Belcher prepared to enforce the Massachusetts anti-priest law. He issued a warrant to the sheriff, the deputy sheriff, and the constables of Suffolk County. This read:

Whereas it hath been represented unto me That there are a considerable number of Papists now residing within the Town of Boston or elsewhere in sd County who have Joyned with their Priest, or do speedily design to assemble together, in order to say their Popish prayers or Celebrate Masses and to use other of the Romish Ceremonies and Rites of Worship, and [who] derive their Power or Jurisdiction from the Pope of Rome and are harboured or entertained by the Inhabitants within the sd County contrary to the good and wholesome laws of the Province;

These are therefore to will and require you and each of you respectively in His Majesty's Name forthwith to make diligent Enquiry after and search for the said Popish Priest and other Papists of his Faith and Perswasion and (if need be) in order to apprehend them or any of them, you are Directed

and Impowered to break open any Dwelling houses, shops, or other Places or apartments, where you shall suspect they or any of them are kept concealed and them or any of them having found you are to Convent before lawful Authority in order to their being secured and proceeded against as to Law and Justice Appertains. Hereof fail not, etc. . . . . Given under my hand and Seal at Arms at Boston this seventeenth day of March in the fifth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King George the Second Annoque Domini 1731.

J. Belcher.<sup>77</sup>

Nothing else is known of this incident, except that the *Boston Weekly Rehearsal*, in its next issue, March 20, 1731/32, carried the following news item:

We hear that Mass has been performed in town this winter by an Irish priest among some Catholics of his own nation of whom it is not doubted we have a considerable number among us.<sup>78</sup>

Among the few persons that can be thought of as having been the priest in question in Boston in 1732 is Father Joseph Greateon, S.J. This priest, whose birthplace is given as either Devonshire, England, or Connaught in Ireland, came to the United States in 1720 or 1721, and was a missionary in Maryland and Pennsylvania. In 1729-1730 and in 1733, he was stationed at Philadelphia, where he built St. Joseph's, the first church. He had his headquarters there for many years. That he had relations with Boston is shown by the fact that among his papers was found a letter from a lady in Boston.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Gov. Belcher to Sheriff of Suffolk, March 17, 1731/32; cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 372-375.

<sup>78</sup> In *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XI (1894), 189; citing from *Freeman's Journal*, which in turn cited from *The Pilot*.

<sup>79</sup> *Woodstock Letters*, II (1873), 18, 76; see also *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XVI (1899), 59 ff.; Hughes, *History*, Text II, 495. Another Irish priest who might be the one sought for in Boston in 1732 was Father James Quin. Father Edward I. Devitt, S.J., writing in the *Woodstock Letters*, LXIII (1934), 8-9, says of him: "Father James Quin, one of the few Jesuits with an Irish name during Colonial times, came to America in 1732. He is mentioned several times with Queen Anne attached to his name; no doubt he attended the stations in Queen Anne County, but had his headquarters at Bohemia. . . . Father Quin died in 1745." Still another Irish priest can also be thought of as possibly the priest in question. He was the Abbé Byrne, chaplain to a French group that made a settlement on Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward Island) in 1732 (*Dr. Lord's Notes*).

On December 11, 1740, the Rev. Dr. Cutler definitely stated, "some few Papists among us we know, the most, and I think a great many of them, are concealed." In two previous reports he had used less definite language.<sup>80</sup>

On the other hand, a Boston historian, in 1749, could speak of Catholics losing the faith because there was no priest. "We have an Instance of this in New England, where many Irish in Language and Religion (I mean Roman Catholicks) have been imported some years since; their children have lost their Language and Religion, and are good subjects."<sup>81</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Feb. 5, 1738; July 5, 1739; *Hawks Transcripts*, copies in *Boston Dioc. Archives*.

<sup>81</sup> W. Douglass, *Summary . . . of the First Planting . . .* (2 vols.: London, 1760; first ed., Boston, 1749-1751), I, 209.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CONQUEST OF CANADA (1740-1760)

#### *I. The Last of the Missionaries (1740-1755)*

THE LONG ANGLO-FRENCH PEACE which followed the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 was threatened in 1739. On September 7th of that year, Boston heard that war was declared between England and Spain, and, fearing that France would soon join in the conflict against England, people faced with dismay its effects on the town of Boston.<sup>1</sup>

In this whole period of wars and preparation for wars, which continued until 1760, the religious element played a most significant part. To the New Englanders of that period, French meant Catholic, and military campaigns took on the character of crusades. When the traditional strife for domination, quiescent after the Treaty of Utrecht, again broke into action, it was marked by the same intransigent religious bitterness as in the past, so manifest at times as to obscure the really underlying political and economic factors.

Besides military activity, the New England preparations consisted first in checking up on French Catholic residents, and keeping an eye on the Catholic Indians, with renewed hope of withdrawing them from any alliance with the French. Governor Belcher, who was recalled at this time, put the New England viewpoint into a sentence when he told the Indians in his last conference with them: "We don't like your going to the French on all occasions. . . . We are jealous because you take your Priests from them and will not from us." Loron answered him with words which New England did not believe: "[The priests] don't lead us to war, but show us the way to Heaven." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 199 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:36 ff.; *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 266 ff.; *Belcher Papers*, March 14, 1739/40; Dec. 22, 1740; April 4, 1741.

## I

In the spring of 1741, William Shirley became Governor of Massachusetts. An English career man of determination and ambition, he carried out wholeheartedly and unscrupulously both the British and the New England policy of opposition to Catholic France in America.<sup>3</sup> Realizing when he came to office that war with France was inevitable, if not imminent, he not only hastened the necessary military measures, but also put into effect the political ones. Naturally, he enforced the anti-French residence law. Naturally, too, from the very beginning, he took up the problem of the pro-French Catholic Indians of Maine.<sup>4</sup>

In the Governor's first conference with these Indians, which took place at St. George's Fort on August 2, 1742, Loron, who was again the Indian spokesman, again showed himself consistent in putting all things on the basis of Dummer's treaty. Shirley did not succeed with him in the discussion of territorial rights, despite his great care to avoid the point of sovereignty.<sup>5</sup>

It is highly significant that at the conference Shirley said nothing about the French missionaries, especially since in his report to the Home Government he made special reference to the great influence exercised by them. He noted that they gained it through their long residence among the Indians, and contrasted it with Massachusetts' only hold upon these natives by trading with them "cheaper than the French can."

By reason of the previous Massachusetts policy in this regard and undoubtedly from a desire not to offend the Indians, the new Governor at first refrained from mentioning what he considered the missionaries' illegal status. He had, however, taken care, when he went to the conference, to have with him the Rev. Stephen Roe, an Anglican minister, attached to King's

<sup>3</sup> C. H. Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley* (2 vols.: New York, 1912), I, esp. p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 313, 337, 355; *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 9-16, 1742; *Baxter Mss.*, XI, 251.

<sup>5</sup> Shirley, *Conference . . . Aug. 2, 1742* (Boston, 1742), in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*.

Chapel in Boston. That clergyman reported to his missionary society about the visit, exactly reflecting the Governor, but adding some points of his own.

Ye Indians (above 400) at the Conference had, most of them, small brazen Crucifixes around their necks, tho' in other respects of habits, manners, way of Life, they appeared very Savage. This, of course, led me to enquire w't they understood or believed relating to the Crucifix, warning them against Image worship or Prayers to Saints & Angels, to which one of their young men with a Gun on his Shoulders, being half French by blood, smartly replied "*chacun garde sa Religion.*" What Religion they have is Popery. The French missionaries *live among them and some French* intermarry with them; to which two causes the success of Popery above ye Protestant Religion (if any attempts have been made to propagate it among them) may be ascribed. The English continue to *trade* with them for Skins, Furs, etc. and have purchased *lands* from them on which an Indian made the remark to one of our Settlers from whom I had it, that the English love their Lands, but the French love their Souls.<sup>6</sup>

Shirley and the other New England leaders believed that on the outbreak of war the French Catholic missionaries would influence their Indian disciples to side with the French against the English and revive the horrors of former days.<sup>7</sup>

A similar situation existed in Nova Scotia, which was in every way intimately connected with Massachusetts. In late 1741 or early 1742 (about two years before December, 1743), Governor Mascarene, of Nova Scotia, wrote to Governor Shirley for assistance "in case of a rupture with France." He had in mind "the Romish priests" and the Acadians' "bigottry to their religion."<sup>8</sup> Indeed, in August, 1743, the English Board of Trade feared the situation so much as to decide on their inhuman policy of

<sup>6</sup> Rev. Stephen Roc, of King's Chapel, Boston, to Sec'y S.P.G. (F. Hawkes, *Transcripts of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*; in *New York Hist. Soc.*, II, 77), Aug. 25, 1742.

<sup>7</sup> Col. Wm. Vaughan to relatives, spring, 1744; Goold to Vaughan, 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 298.

<sup>8</sup> Mascarene to Secretary of State, T. Akins, ed. (*Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, Halifax, 1869), p. 128, Nov. 23, 1741.

deporting the Acadians.<sup>9</sup> Their decision was based on religious considerations, for it involved the idea that the Acadians could not become loyal British subjects because they were Roman Catholics.

## II

During these same five years the French on their side had also been making preparations for the inevitable war. On their side also the religious element played its part.

For in dealing with both the Indians and the Acadians, the French authorities depended especially on the missionaries. In the years 1740 and 1741, no less than thirteen new Jesuit missionaries arrived in Canada. As the yearly average of new arrivals was three, the larger numbers for the years 1740 and 1741 were interpreted by the French Court as "new proof of the Jesuits' zeal for the Royal cause." The Minister wrote an expression of his gratitude to the Father General, noting his conviction that "all the Jesuit missionaries would be zealous in stimulating both the good will of the Indians and their careful execution of the orders given to them [by the French authorities] for His Majesty's service."<sup>10</sup>

The event did not correspond to his expectations, although renewed missionary activity did indeed ensue. The Abenaki missions were fully manned. Father Lawrence Thomas Corthier, one of the new arrivals, was assigned to the Penobscot mission in the fall of 1742, or perhaps earlier, even in 1741. By the same time Father Germain, who had come to Canada in 1739, was well settled on the St. John. Father Syresme was still with the Norridgewoks.<sup>11</sup>

Father Syresme's early days in Maine have already been described in detail in the previous chapter. Here it suffices to

<sup>9</sup> Board of Trade to King, *Nova Scotia Arch.*, 26:13; J. B. Brebner, *New England's Outpost* (New York, 1927), p. 123, cites version in *C.O.*, 5:4.

<sup>10</sup> Minister to Father St.-Pé, March 30, 1744, *Arch. Col.*, B 78; 48½.

<sup>11</sup> Father Corthier arrived in Canada in 1741. The *Jesuit Catalogue* of that year speaks of Father Constant among the Abenakis, but there is no evidence he went there. Father Constant had arrived in Canada in 1740.



state that he had continued to correspond with the Protestant minister of Georgetown, the Rev. Mr. Rutherford. On May 26, 1744, the latter, who was probably already chaplain at St. George's Fort, wrote to Samuel Waldo:

I have not seen the Priest this winter. He sent me a letter lately, full of usual friendship, which I returned in specie. He writes about his frame, if it was done w'ch I could not inform him, nor do I think any trouble necessary about it at present.<sup>12</sup>

In the following month, when it was known that war had begun, Mr. Rutherford again mentioned receiving a letter from the priest, this time a long letter "with additional assurances of his best endeavours to promote ye continuation of peace."<sup>13</sup>

Father Syresme's whole story in Maine gives more than necessary evidence for disregarding either English fear or French hope that he would set the Indians on the warpath against the English. Up to the very eve of the outbreak of war, he was for peace. And if, as is most probable, he used his influence with the young missionary of the Penobscots, Father Corthier, it would have been in the same direction.

During the pre-war period, a new Abenaki establishment was begun on the Vermont side of upper Lake Champlain, at what is still called Missisquoi Bay. This was not only a new Indian mission in New England, but likewise a new evidence of French preparation for the war. There is some reason to believe that this new mission was planned, and perhaps begun, in the spring of 1739. In any case, it was surely in existence by the autumn of 1743, and had as chaplain the well-known and experienced Abenaki missionary, Father Lauverjat, formerly at Penobscot.

The new mission was regarded by the French as particularly important. It would not only afford the new French settlers around Fort St. Frédéric the services of a priest, but also be a means of attracting to the French those Indians, both Loups

<sup>12</sup> Rutherford to Waldo, *Waldo Papers* (Mass. Hist. Soc.). Would this "frame" have to do with the priest's hope to build a new church at Narantuaq?

<sup>13</sup> *Waldo Papers*.

and Abenakis, who resided among the English. In the spring of 1744 orders were sent by the French King to the officials in Canada to neglect nothing in seconding the efforts of Father Lauverjat in this regard.<sup>14</sup> Up to October, 1744, the Government had spent some 1500 livres for the building of the log-house and the purchase of some furniture and utensils for the missionary. The latter urgently requested the building of a chapel, and the government officials recognized its necessity.<sup>15</sup>

The war broke out in May, 1744. During the period of preparation for it, both English and French sought the aid of the Indians; both recognized the paramount importance of the Indians' religion and of their missionaries in this regard; both believed that the Catholic missionary would turn the Indians in favor of the French. Neither side believed that the priest had the spiritual good of the Indians (and the Acadians) at heart more deeply than any political or racial interests.

### III

The French King's declaration of war arrived at Louisbourg on May 5/16, 1744.<sup>16</sup> Because the English officials heard of it only ten days later, the French at Cape Breton obtained an initial advantage. They first captured Canso, and then struck at Annapolis, hoping to take advantage of the sparsely garrisoned condition of the British there and of the undoubtedly pro-French sentiments of the Catholic Indians and Acadians.

In order to enlist the active aid of these last-named groups, the French leaders turned immediately to the missionaries in the Nova Scotia orbit.<sup>17</sup> As for the priests among the Indians, only Father LeLoutre met the French expectation. He was living at Chignecto, in the territory controlled by the French. Long actively engaged in a zealous patriotic endeavor to oppose the English by all means in his power, he eagerly set out

<sup>14</sup> Memoir of King, March 24, 1744, *Arch. Marine*, B 78, fol. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Beauharnois to the Minister, Oct., 1744, *Arch. Col.*, C 11, vol. 81, fol. 251.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Shirley to Newcastle, July 7, 1744 (*Lincoln, Shirley Corr.*, I, 133).

<sup>17</sup> Duquesnel to Beauharnois, June 1, 1744 (*Arch. Col., Am. du Nord, Corr. Gen.*, C 11, A 8).

with his Indians for the fray. On the other hand, neither Father Germain, who was on the St. John, nor whatever priest was on the Penobscot incited his Indians to war against the English.<sup>18</sup>

In Acadia proper, an even more unexpected disappointment overtook French hopes. The priests there generally refused to throw their influence on the side against the English, and the Acadians themselves resisted both the French caresses and their threats. It was the Catholicity of these inhabitants and their respect for the oath of allegiance which caused this attitude; and it was their priests who kept these points before their mind. In fact, just because these priests had taken such a stand, they had to undergo the displeasure of the French monarch, who, except for two of the priests, condemned their conduct.

He will see that they no longer share in the King's funds for the Acadian clergy. He hopes that the bishop likewise will make them aware that he too is dissatisfied, and that it is for their interest, if the French return to Acadia, to efface the unfavourable impressions they have given of their attachment to his service and to the country.<sup>19</sup>

The French Governor at Quebec had asked the aid of the Missisquoi Indians also. In the summer of 1744 he sent a military officer there "to lead the war-song." From Father Lauverjat he expected only to be kept informed.

The French civil and military officers were not alone in seeking the active aid of the Indians: Shirley, too, sought the help of those in Maine and in New York. He succeeded only with the few Pegwackets. The other tribes in Maine desired to remain neutral, with, of course, the usual conditions, provided that the English did not attack them or threaten Quebec. Resisting Shirley's insistence upon a part of Dummer's Treaty which the Indians had not acknowledged, they answered his in-

<sup>18</sup> Bradbury to Shirley, June 18, 1744 (*Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 290); *Boston Gazette*, May 7, 1745.

<sup>19</sup> H. D'Arles, *Acadie* (3 vols.: Quebec, 1916-1921), I, 409; *Canada Française, Documents Inédits* (Quebec, 1889), II, 80, 82; Thomas Akins, ed., *Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, 145-149, 159; *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), I, pt. VI, p. 47.

vation to fight against the French with the words, "Tho' some others of the same way of worship had fought each other, yet they by no means do so. . . . This however did not mean that they would join the French."<sup>20</sup>

Up to July 12, 1745, the Indians of Maine kept the peace. On that date Shirley sent news to them that the English had captured Louisbourg. At the same time, he urged them to keep their treaty with the English and not to trust in the duplicity of the French; and requested the Indians to send some of their chiefs to Boston "to confirm friendship."<sup>21</sup>

But on July 29th, Shirley wrote Pepperrell that this letter arrived one day too late and that the Penobscots were already attacking the Eastern settlements, especially St. George's.<sup>22</sup>

He, therefore, declared war against the Maine Indians on August 23, 1745. In the race between English and French officials to attain the active help of the Indians, the French won. But the factor which decided that victory was not so much the French diplomatic ability as it was the British threat to the Indians' own existence. The final determining event was the British conquest of Cape Breton and its implied threat against Canada.

At the moment when the Indians of Maine went to war against the English, the French Catholic missionary on the Kennebec, Father De Syresme, Apostle of Peace, was still at his post. He died only on August 28, 1747.<sup>23</sup>

The missionary was the spiritual father of the Indians, and both in peace and war he remained with his disciples. In war, as in peace, he was also the quasi-official correspondent of the French Government in Canada. Even up to October 5, 1745, he wrote to Quebec. In turn, he received letters from Quebec, and was entrusted with the distribution of presents to the Indians. Undoubtedly he was also the intermediary for transmitting orders from the French officials to the Indians. But

<sup>20</sup> Beauharnois to the Minister, Oct., 1744; *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 281, 290, 293; *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11, vol. 81, fol. 251.

<sup>21</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 217-218; Lincoln, *op. cit.*, I, 247-248.

<sup>22</sup> Lincoln, *op. cit.*, I, 256 ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Jesuit Catalogue* (ms. in *St. Mary's Jesuit Arch.*, Montreal).



that he incited the Indians to war against the English is wholly unproved. It was the English offensive and not the Catholic priest that brought that about.

During November, the Penobscots, as well as the St. John and Passamaquoddy tribes (and probably the Norridgewoks also), to the number of some five or six hundred, sought refuge in Quebec. They took up winter quarters in different places along the southern side of the St. Lawrence, and received rations "while awaiting opportunity to be useful." According to the French Governor, "their joining the French rather than falling under English domination merits this care of them."<sup>24</sup> During the rest of the war they continued as active allies of the French.<sup>25</sup>

#### IV

The outstanding event of the war for America was the Louisbourg expedition. It was a daring stroke, suddenly conceived and brilliantly executed. On January 9, 1745, Shirley presented to the Legislature the motives for undertaking it, which were chiefly economic and political. Emphasis was laid especially on the sole control of the fisheries and the aid to a later attack on Canada. The Legislature, after much investigation, first resolved against the project, but subsequently, on January 26th, adopted it. Steps were immediately taken to put it into execution.

Besides the economic and political motives there was a strong religious motive in the whole affair.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, it is the universal verdict of historians that the campaign became a crusade of Protestant against Papist. The religious element was present from the beginning.

A special public fast was ordered in addition to the regular

<sup>24</sup> Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, Nov. 2, and Dec. 1, 1745. *Corr. Gen., Canada*, C 11, vol. 83, fols. 74 ff.; see also fol. 173; also *ibid.*, vol. 115, fol. 207v, and 208v.

<sup>25</sup> At least on one occasion, in June, 1747, Father Lauverjat was with the Penobscots (in the futile attack on Fort St. George's), C 11 A, *Finances*, vol. 116, fol. 123, for Feb., 1748.

<sup>26</sup> *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, II, 113; cf. Lincoln, *Corr. of Shirley*.

spring Fast Day; the Thursday lecture day was turned into a day of prayer; <sup>27</sup> prayer meetings were held in all parts of the country,<sup>28</sup> and "from every pulpit rose the supplication that the God of battles would go forth with the host of His chosen people and point the way to victory."<sup>29</sup> A certain minister afterwards made the statement:

Those who were venturing into the danger seemed to be fullest of trust and courage. Many filled their vessels with prayers, and asking ours, they threw themselves into the divine protection. . . . "Pray for us and we'll fight for you" was the valiant and endearing language with which they left us.<sup>30</sup>

The religious enthusiasm manifested in regard to this expedition was contemporaneous with the Protestant revival known as "The Great Awakening." This movement had passed through its first stage in Boston some years previously. Its leader, the Rev. George Whitefield, made a second visit to these parts in early 1745, and played a significant rôle in arousing the religious sentiment that characterized the whole Louisbourg incident. He had particularly intimate relations with General Pepperrell, who, as a devout business man, was quite fittingly put in command of the troops. When Pepperrell asked his advice about accepting the offered command, the minister, although he cautioned him about the risks involved, nevertheless gave the motto for the expedition: "*Nil desperandum, Christo Duce.*"

It was natural, therefore, that "a number of Whitefield's followers enlisted in the Louisbourg expedition," and gave vent to their revivalist sentiment. One of the chaplains of the expedition, Parson Samuel Moody, is said

to have shouldered an axe, vowing to destroy therewith all the images in the Jesuits' church at Louisbourg, and afterwards to

<sup>27</sup> *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, III, 115; T. Prince, *Sermon*, July 18, 1745 (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*); W. Love, *Fast and Thanksgiving Days* (Boston, 1895), p. 300.

<sup>28</sup> C. Chauncy, *Sermon*, July 18, 1745 (*Harvard Univ. Library*).

<sup>29</sup> J. Hannay, *History of Acadia* (St. John, N.B., 1879), p. 340.

<sup>30</sup> T. Prince, *Sermon*, July 18, 1745, pp. 23-24 (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

preach therein (which vow he is said to have fulfilled to the letter). Hearing of [this], Deacon John Gray, of Biddeford, wrote General Pepperell: "Oh! that I could be with you and dear Parson Moody in that church to destroy the images there set up and hear the true Gospel of Our Lord and Saviour there preached." <sup>31</sup>

Unlike the Crusaders of old, however, these New Englanders did not march to save the Holy Cross, but rather to remove it. The day after Louisbourg surrendered (June 16th), "The troops marched in, and the French chapel was occupied for religious services, perhaps not by the iconoclast, who carried the hatchet, but by one of the same faith and nation." <sup>32</sup> The crosses were pulled down, and one of them, taken from the parish church, was brought back to Boston as a trophy. At some moment it was presented to Harvard College, and during the nineteenth century stood above the entrance to the Library.<sup>33</sup> It now hangs in the Treasure Room.

According to the terms of the capitulation, all the inhabitants, two thousand in number, were later transported. Some were shipped directly to Brest in France, but seven hundred or more were sent via Boston. Among these was Father Maillard, Vicar-General of Cape Breton, and one of the greatest Indian missionaries of the age. There is no record that he set foot in the city proper during his short stay here. By March 14, 1746, he had reached Paris, and counted upon returning to his mission among the Indians. Other prisoners, however, remained some time in Boston.<sup>34</sup>

The news of the fall of Louisbourg came to Boston on July 3, 1745, and was received with great rejoicing. The streets were

<sup>31</sup> Usher Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperell* (3rd ed.: Boston, 1856), March-June, 1745, esp. p. 52.

<sup>32</sup> *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, III, 117.

<sup>33</sup> There were two Catholic chapels, one within, and the other without, the citadel of Louisbourg. T. Haliburton, *Historical Account of Nova Scotia* (2 vols.: Halifax, 1829), I, 113. A picture of the Cross is to be found in the frontispiece of the third volume of the *Memorial History*.

<sup>34</sup> Minister to Bishop of Quebec, March 14, 1746. *Arch. Col.*, B, vol. 83, fol. 201½. This is the only reference to Maillard's being at Boston and is subject to caution. Note that Shirley did not confine the prisoners in jail.

filled with people all the day, and bonfires with fireworks were held in the evening. It was a foreshadowing of a later "night before the Fourth." July 18th was set apart as a day of Thanksgiving.

It is worth noting that the Rev. Mr. Chauncy, in his sermon on the official Thanksgiving Day, took occasion to ask

the exercise of all Christian Compassion towards those of the Enemies whom it hath pleased God to put in our Power . . . We should not insult them, we should not abraid them, we should not treat them with Harshness and Severity; but endeavour to make their captive State as comfortable to them as may consist with the publick Good.

Mr. Chauncy also prayed that God might

give all needed Direction as to resettling the Place. And may all proper Care be taken that the pure Gospel of Christ be preached in this part of the Dominion of Anti-Christ. May the Man of Sin, that Son of Perdition, be no longer acknowledged as Christ's Vice-regent. May all *Graven* Images be pulled down, all Superstition removed, and the Religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is contained in the Bible, be upheld and practised there. . . .<sup>35</sup>

Hardly had the New England joy over Louisbourg reached its peak when the changing fortunes of war turned it into grief and fear. News of a great French victory over the Anglo-Allied armies in Europe (Fontenoy) reached Boston. Not long afterwards, this was followed by word of an apparently successful rebellion in Scotland in favor of the Young Stuart Pretender, supported by France and Spain.

These items of unfavorable war news from Europe served as the incentive to a new outburst of opposition to Catholicity in New England. For the successful enemies of England — namely, the Kings of Spain and France and the Pretender who styled himself rightful King of Great Britain — were all Catholics, and most of all, the Pope had, up to that time, supported the Old Pretender.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> C. Chauncy, *Thanksgiving Sermon*, July 18, 1745, p. 22 ff.

<sup>36</sup> Vaughan, *The Last of the Stuarts* (London, 1906), chap. VI.



This crisis brought to expression all the latent opposition to Popery that characterized Puritanism. The outstanding example of Boston's anti-Catholic feeling on this occasion was a sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. Chauncy, on February 6, 1745/46. In an extraordinarily vivid presentation of the Boston mind at that time, the reverend preacher set forth the grounds of its fear: it was in the last issue fear of a Papist victory.

Again, as of old, the Pope was dubbed "the Man of Sin, that Son of Perdition," whose religion, full of "Fopperies and Superstitions and abominable Idolatries," was "the religion of Anti-Christ, and whose interest was the interest of 'Hell.'" Again the calumnious propaganda was aired: "The Pope's religion not only sets [a Popish Prince] free from the obligation of promises and oaths made to heretics . . . but obliges him, upon pain of damnation, to act counter to them all, [and] whenever he has got Power into his hands . . . to extirpate the Protestant Religion and establish that of Rome." The complementary part of the thesis lay in this, that, as the British nation was "the chief Bulwark of the Protestant Cause, the design of our enemies is really a design against Christ."<sup>37</sup>

The Pretender was beaten at Culloden, on April 16, 1746. The news arriving in Boston brought forth the Thanksgiving sermon by the Rev. Thomas Prince. Like Chauncy's, its first part depicts what he thought Britain was threatened with in the victory of a Catholic ruler and his party.<sup>38</sup>

## V

As for Catholics themselves in Boston at that time, there is little evidence. At the very beginning of the war, it was stated that, among the three hundred and sixty soldiers sent by Governor Shirley for the relief of Annapolis in the summer of 1644, some were "Irish Roman Catholics whom they forced to make the voyage by keeping them in prison."<sup>39</sup> Mention of

<sup>37</sup> C. Chauncy, *Counsel of Two confederate Kings*, Feb. 6, 1745/46 (Harvard Univ. Library).

<sup>38</sup> T. Prince, *Sermon*, Aug. 14, 1746, pp. 12 ff.

<sup>39</sup> Letter from Louisbourg, Nov. 19, 1744, in *Coll. de Mss.*, III, 211 ff.

other Catholics here is confined chiefly to the French prisoners of war.

One pleasing incident had to do with the coming to Boston of certain Irish indentured servants. Some sixteen girls and three boys, who were on their way on an English vessel from Ireland to Philadelphia, were taken captive by a French privateer and brought to Cape Breton. The French Governor gave them their liberty and sent them to Governor Shirley. In explaining their case, he noted that "the English Captain who had charge of them still pretends to have the right to sell them on their arrival even as slaves, which is neither just nor legal, for once they were captured they were no longer at his disposal. I beg you also, sir, to grant them their freedom." Governor Shirley had them brought before him and promised them his protection against the claim of their captain, and he saw to it that the servants were taken care of in the Boston almshouse until they could provide for themselves.<sup>40</sup>

Two years later some individual Irish Catholics were in the news in Boston in another manner, this time eminently tragic. They had been serving as soldiers in the British garrison at Canso when it was taken by the French. They had not been sent from Louisbourg to Boston in exchange because they signed on with a French privateer. In October, 1744, they were taken captive, together with the rest of the privateer's crew, by an English vessel and were brought to Boston as traitors. After imprisonment for almost two years they were finally tried by an Admiralty Court at Boston on Friday, June 27, 1746. They were ten in all: James Cattee, Morgan Williams, John Regan, Daniel Harrington, Matthew Ryan, Roger Ryan (his brother), Thomas Rigby, Morris Kerby, Peter Ferry, and Edward Lynch. After a trial of eleven hours all, except Harrington, Williams, and Lynch, were found guilty and sentenced to death. The *Boston Post* told their story:

July 24 was the day appointed for their execution. They all professed themselves Roman Catholics and greatly bewail[ed] their want of a Romish Priest to assist and absolve them. The

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 208, 211; *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 84.

ministers of the town visited them daily, and were at great pains to prepare 'em for death. They attend[ed] the publick worship at the Old South Meeting House (on Sunday July 20) and behaved very seriously.

On the day appointed, three of them, Peter Ferry, Thomas Rigby, and James Cattee were executed, the other four being reprieved. "They died as they had lived," *The Post* reported, "ignorant and obstinate Roman Catholics and at their desire, were put into their Coffins and buried with all their cloaths [*sic*] and Crosses and other religious Trumpery about 'em." <sup>41</sup>

Catholics again occupied the attention of Bostonians in late September, 1746, when a great fear gripped the city and all New England at the approach of a fleet, sent out by France to retake Louisbourg and to do what else it could against the British on this side of the Atlantic.<sup>42</sup>

As soon as the news was verified, on Sunday, September 21st, the Governor's Council was called to assemble, even though it was Sunday, and the Boston selectmen summoned a town meeting for the morrow. The town meeting learned that the people were frightened by the presence in the city of the French prisoners of war, and there was some desire to have them confined. One person charged that "a number of French women that are Prisoners [of war] said that if their Husbands were convicted to Prison, they would sett the Town on fire." Another testimony took the form: "there are several persons, Roman Catholics, that now dwell and reside in this Town and it may be very dangerous to permit such persons to reside here in case we shall be attacked by an enemy."

Whether distinct or not, these items led to the appointment of a committee "to take care and prevent any danger the town may be in from Roman Catholics residing here, by making strict search and enquiry after all such and pursue such methods relating to 'em as the law directs."

Doubtless, the committee at once learned that there was no law of the Province directed against Roman Catholics as such,

<sup>41</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, June 30, July 21, 28, 1746.

<sup>42</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 325.

and a new suggestion was made; for the town meeting that same day passed an order desiring the selectmen to take action against French nationals then resident in Boston. In accordance therewith, the selectmen brought the matter before three justices of the peace, who issued a warrant against "all such persons as are subjects of the French King who reside in [Boston] and have not liberty from the Governor and Council so to do. . . ." It was either unknown to these justices, or disregarded by them, that the French prisoners of war had permission from the Governor to reside in the city. This fact was, however, known to the sheriff, who refused to jail the seventy persons, men, women, and children, brought to him by the constable and who continued in this refusal, even after the constable procured an order of commitment from some justices of the peace.

The incident had two notable sequels. First, on September 25th, the town (after having heard that "the laws in force relating to Roman Catholics were insufficient to have such persons arrested, although it was suspected that a considerable number of them were in the town") voted that the Representatives of the town in the Legislature "be and hereby are desired to endeavour at the next session of the General Court to get a law passed that shall be effectual to secure the town from any danger they may be in, by Roman Catholicks dwelling here."<sup>43</sup> Secondly, the law requested by the town of Boston never did pass the Legislature, and perhaps was never put up to that body. The Act of 1704 touched "*French* Roman Catholicks" who did not have the Governor's license, and therefore it did not touch Irish Catholics or those French Catholics who did have the Governor's license.

The Irish Catholics who were here (for it was thought that besides the French, a great many other "Papists" were here) were said to be so "dispersed, disguised, and concealed, that it is next to impossible to enumerate them." It was also believed that "they resort to our churches for the most part." They had no opportunity, of course, to practice their own faith.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XIV, 103 ff.; Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 366 ff.

<sup>44</sup> Rev. Timothy Cutler to S. P. G., cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265.



By the beginning of November, all Boston's fear from the French fleet had passed.<sup>45</sup> It is extremely interesting to know that some of the news which quieted its fear came from Catholic priests in Nova Scotia, who continued their amicable relations with the English authorities at Annapolis.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, Boston gave thanks for its delivery. Some pious folk considered it a miracle.<sup>47</sup> "For generations New Englanders loved to tell how the armada was wrecked on the very Sabbath evening when in the Old South Meeting House in Boston, the Rev. Thomas Prince was praying that God might blow with his winds and scatter them."<sup>48</sup> But the Rev. Jonathan Edwards also carefully noted "the destruction of the wealth of the anti-Christian kingdom, i.e., France; that had been surely accomplished in the reduction of Louisbourg, the capture by British seamen of many of the French merchantmen, and the almost total ruin of their Indian trade."<sup>49</sup>

The news of the proclamation for cessation of arms arrived in America only in October, 1748, and New England was frightfully disappointed that the treaty which ended the war deprived her of her conquest.<sup>50</sup>

## VI

This religious sentiment was also in line with English war propaganda. With Shirley's advent there began a continuous series of anti-Catholic publications in New England, whipping up the war spirit of the people. In 1743 there was published here for the first time Locke's *Essay on Toleration*, with its explicit condemnation of the sect of the Roman Catholics, as inimical to any nation in which it may exist. In the same year was started here *The American Magazine* (advertised in March in *The Post* and published in late September), which during its

<sup>45</sup> Shirley to Greene, Oct. 23, 1746, Nov. 4, 1746, Lincoln, *op. cit.*, pp. 359-366.

<sup>46</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, Nov. 3, 10 (Letter from Louisbourg, Oct. 25, 1746).

<sup>47</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, II, 328.

<sup>48</sup> H. B. Parkes, *Jonathan Edwards* (New York, 1930), p. 182.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>50</sup> A copy of the definitive treaty arrived in Boston on May 9, 1749. Shirley to Bedford (*Cal. State Papers*, LXIII, 47).

nearly four years of existence ran the gamut of anti-Popery. In 1745 an anti-Jacobite book, entitled *The Church of Rome Evidently Proved Heretick*, was reprinted here, and in the following year appeared *The Protestants' Resolution*. This literature on the whole obtained its material and its viewpoint from England.<sup>51</sup>

A striking manifestation of anti-Catholic sentiment during the war with Spain and France occurred in the development of Boston's famous Pope Day celebration, with its anti-Popery pageant. There is good reason to believe that, as early as 1745 or 1746, the pageantry was already constituted in the fashion which it certainly followed a few years later. Three effigies hideously formed, yet humorously contrived, were carried about the city on a float for the mocking admiration of the mob, and were burned in the evening. The float represented the inside of St. Peter's Church in Rome; one of the three effigies depicted the Pope sitting on his throne; behind him another effigy depicted the Devil, holding a three-pronged pitchfork in his hand, with which at times he thrust the Pope in the back; and a third effigy depicted the Young Pretender as a youth standing before the Pope and awaiting his commands.<sup>52</sup>

The Church was the "Lantern," apsidal in form, with a cross on top and (lighted?) candles inside. "Here you behold the Pope and here Old Harry *in his Rome*." <sup>53</sup>

There are likewise evident connections between the Pope Night celebrations in Boston and some remnants of Old English mystery plays. Certain gangs, in rough clothes and disguised, forced entrance and demanded money of the householders, under pretext of performing a play. These so-called "Anticks" are not referred to in Boston annals on any other

<sup>51</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, March 7, July 4, 1743; Sister M. Augustina Ray, *American Opinion of Roman Catholicism in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1936), pp. 191-194; R. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade* (New York, 1938), p. 28, n. 4.

<sup>52</sup> Taken from description in *Annapolis Gazette*, Dec. 4, 1755, of the Pope Day pageant of 1755. Obviously this kind of pageant had a definite explanation in late 1745 or 1746, when the Young Pretender would have been substituted in it for the (Old) Pretender of previous celebrations.

<sup>53</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXIV (1907), 133.

occasion than Pope Night, although in all probability the play that they garbled was a Christmas mystery, and they became connected with Pope Night, while Christmas celebrations in Boston were forbidden.<sup>54</sup>

This vulgar observance took on an added popularity with the beginning of the war scare. In the last years of Governor Belcher's régime, the selectmen of Boston had to take measures to "prevent spoil, and damage to the trees and fencing in the Common for making bonfires, etc.," on the occasion of Pope's Night, "when large numbers of people meet there."<sup>55</sup>

During the subsequent years and the actual duration of the French war, the celebration developed into a rowdy, not to say scandalous, affair. The crowds increased to mobs and their amusements were turned into public injuries. This was the case in 1745, whose excesses were probably due in great part to the celebration of the Louisbourg victory and in part to the fear of French successes in Europe. Perhaps the Scottish Rebellion and the Young Pretender's initial successes likewise added their share.

Details of that Pope Day were reported by the *Weekly Post-Boy*, as follows:

Tuesday last being the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, two Popes were made and carried thro' the Streets in the evening, one from the North, the other from the South End of the Town, attended by a vast number of negroes and white servants, armed with clubs, staves, and cutlashes, who were very abusive to the Inhabitants, insulting the Persons and breaking the windows, etc. of such as did not give them money to their satisfaction, and even of many of those who had given them liberally; and the two Popes meeting in Cornhill, their followers were so infatuated as to fall upon each other with the utmost Rage and Fury. Several were sorely wounded and bruised, some left for dead, and rendered incapable of any business for a long time to the great Loss and Damage of their respective Masters.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Breck, *Recollections* (Philadelphia, 1877), p. 36.

<sup>55</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XV, 81, 141, 259.

<sup>56</sup> *Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, Nov. 18, 1745.

Respectable Boston's good sense was aroused, and a letter of protest was sent to the newspaper:

I hope you will not suffer the grand fray, not to say bloody, that happened before your Door last Tuesday evening to pass off without a public rebuke: . . . What a scandal and Infamy to a Protestant Mob, . . . to fall upon one another in a Rage and Fury which only Hell could inspire or the Devil could represent! Is this a meet or sufferable show of Protestant zeal against Popery? Why has no more been done to prevent or suppress such Riotous proceedings *which have been long growing upon us, and as long bewailed by all sober Persons*, must be humbly left to our betters to say.<sup>57</sup>

Nothing official, apparently, was then done to stop the nuisance. The celebrations increased yearly, and continued to do so, even after the war itself had ceased. In 1749 and 1750, the justices began to manifest some opposition.<sup>58</sup> When, in 1752 a person was killed in the street "by a disorderly riotous Crew of people," on Pope Night, the authorities were finally brought to realize what the promotion and the toleration of this public attack on Popery could lead to; and a bill was brought into the Legislature (November 27, 1752) to regulate it. The motives cited in the preamble were those, not of religious liberty, but only of public order.<sup>59</sup>

The French war was also probably not without its influence on two important statements of principle, which were made at this time. One was the first printed application of the Lockian principles. The historian William Douglass declared that Catholics were too much indulged in Maryland and Pennsylvania, where the public exercise of their religion was tolerated, since "that religion is pernicious to human society in general and tends to subvert our happy constitution."<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> W. Douglass, *Summary . . . of the First Planting . . .* (2 vols.: Boston, 1749-1751), I, 238 n.; *Boston Post-Boy*, Nov. 5, 1750; *New Eng. Hist.-Gen. Reg.*, XXIV, 61.

<sup>59</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, XIX, 487, Nov. 27, 1752 (printed in *Acts and Resolves*, III, 664); cf. *ibid.*, III, 647, 997; also IV, 78, 617; V, 87, 459, 1122.

<sup>60</sup> W. Douglass, *op. cit.*, I, 225 n.



The other was made in a bequest to Harvard College, to provide a quadrennial lecture

for the detecting & convicting & exposing the Idolatry of the Romish Church, Their Tyranny, Usurpations, Damnable Heresies, fatal Errors, abominable Superstitions, & other crying Wickednesses in their high Places; And Finally that the Church of Rome is that mystical Babylon, That Man of Sin, That apostate Church spoken of, in the New Testament.<sup>61</sup>

The first lecture on Popery under the foundation was given in 1757; after which date every fourth year witnessed a public exhibition of absolute hostility to things Catholic in the great training school of New England leaders.<sup>62</sup>

## VII

After the end of the war, the Maine Indians had returned to their homes and sued for peace with Massachusetts. The new Indian peace treaty, agreed on at Falmouth October 16, 1749, was based on Dummer's and said nothing about religion, but both sides understood that the religious situation would remain as it had been before the war. Accordingly, a short time afterwards, Father Simon-Pierre Gounon, S.J., was sent as missionary to the Penobscots. (Father Corthier had gone back to France.) He was then just turned thirty years of age, had enjoyed an excellent education, and was zealous for the mission.<sup>63</sup> He was at that moment the only priest in Maine because, for the time being, no one replaced Father Syresme. In this difficult situation, he acted an honorable part on several occasions.

<sup>61</sup> Will of Judge Paul Dudley, Roxbury, Jan. 1, 1750/51, *Harvard College Records*, II (*Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XVI, 854 ff.).

<sup>62</sup> An excellent summary of the Dudleian Lectures and their spirit is given in Riley, *History of Catholicity*, pp. 21 ff.

<sup>63</sup> Father Simon-Pierre Gounon was born in Toulouse, France, on April 20, 1719; studied at the Jesuit College of his native city, where he obtained the degree of M.A. He entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Paris in 1743, and after his ordination was assigned to the Canadian mission. He arrived in Canada in 1748. Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites . . . XVIII<sup>me</sup> siècle*, II, 148 n. For Father Syresme's death, A. Melançon, *Liste des Missionnaires Jésuites* (Montreal, 1929), p. 69.

One of these had to do with the murder of a Norridgewok Indian by some Englishmen. In accord with the treaty, the Indians waited patiently, but in vain for the English to do justice. But the English race-hatred was so powerful that despite the Government's best efforts no conviction could be obtained. Hutchinson commented on the case: "Many good people . . . lamented the disposition . . . to distinguish between the guilt of killing an Indian and that of killing an Englishman, as if God had not made of one blood all the nations of men upon the face of the earth."<sup>64</sup> Rightfully despairing of English justice, a minority of the Narantuaks finally attempted to apply their own. First, they made some destructive raids, and then they sought aid from their "cousins" at Penobscot and in Canada. Although some in Canada did help, the Penobscots resisted the pressure; they kept the peace and were even willing to renew the broken peace treaty with the Massachusetts Government at the latter's request. Their missionary, Father Gounon, had evidently thrown his influence on that side.<sup>65</sup>

The Jesuit's letter, addressed to the Council and dated at Penobscot, July 11/22, read thus:

Sir and Gentlemen Counsellors,

The peace and Love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Savages of Pannuampsgeg have done me a real pleasure in desiring me to write to assure your Eminence and their Excellencies the Counsellors that they persist in the sentiments of peace towards you. Tis in vain, say they, that the Frenchman sets everything on work to ingage us to declare war with you; we have answered him that we are free; and that we could not violate, without some reason, the treaty of peace which we have made with you. He secretly sends strangers to war against you at Narantsuag, hoping that you will take occasion from thence to break the treaty. Tis for this reason we pray your Eminence and their Excellencies the Counsellors to disappoint the Frenchman, and to continue your friendship to us.

<sup>64</sup> *History*, III, 3; see also 2 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, X (1899), 81 ff.; *Mass. Arch.*, 32:15.

<sup>65</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 40, 395, 387, 409, 410.

For me, Sir, who am a minister of Jesus Christ, my love embraces all those whom He hath redeemed with his blood. I wish that they may live, that they may walk in the ways of the Lord; that the Savage may live, that he may abandon his passions; that the Englishman may live that he may open his eyes to the light, and that he may renounce with which [*sic*] he has been blinded from his infancy, without which tis vain for them to hope to have a part in the eternal Happiness. Tis this makes me be with sentiments of the most profound respect, Sir

Your Eminences & their Excellencies the Counsellors'

most humble and obedient servant,

S. Peter Gounon, of the Company of Jesus.<sup>66</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Father Gounon's timely and characteristic action again saved the much-desired peace. On the 3rd of August, a party of some forty St. Francis Abenakis, "who lived in a village where there was no missionary," appeared at Penobscot and sought out the priest. They told him that they were on their way to strike the English, being dissatisfied with what the English had done; and now, since they were setting out for war, they wanted to go to confession. Up to that moment the missionary had received them kindly. But when he heard this design of theirs, he told the four leaders of the party that "if any of their group were killed in the combat, they would be deprived of Christian prayers, and that if any were wounded and died on their return, they, too, would be deprived of Christian burial, and thrown into the ditch like dogs." That was his way of threatening them with excommunication if they broke the peace. It was sufficient. The chief leader of the group decided, as he himself told the story, "not to go against my enemy, lest I should see myself abandoned by the Church, my good mother."

Father Gounon had not accomplished this result without difficulty. For before he convinced the group, he threatened to inform the English of their plan and actually had sent off a letter of warning to the English. This he did on his own initi-

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIII, 409, July 11/22.

ative, without consulting the Penobscot chiefs. His whole desire was for peace.<sup>67</sup>

On August 5th, some of the younger Penobscots went to Captain Bradbury, the English commander of the fort, and reported that there would be no attack. They also desired him not to send on the Jesuit's letter, or, if he had already sent it, to write another letter contradicting it.

Now that the anticipated crisis was averted, Bradbury discovered a strange interpretation of the Jesuit's motives. Instead of being grateful to him for having prevented an attack on the fort, he pretended to believe that the whole incident was "a piece of French roguery, continued on purpose to prevent the conference with the Government, lest we should come to have a good understanding and live like brothers together." In reporting to the Governor, he also declared that "the Indians themselves saw that this was really so, and they knew it and blamed the Jesuit for sending *so suddenly* and *privately* as he did." This was probably his reason for the added assertion that the Jesuit's letter "would certainly bring the whole [Indian] country on him."<sup>68</sup> This unique conclusion and observation of the English commander were as far-reaching as they were unjustified, being used almost verbatim by Governor Shirley a few years later, in a similar situation.

The peace conference of 1751 was held as designed, but as the Narantuaks did not attend, the actual renewal of the treaty was postponed.

## VIII

Lieutenant-Governor Phips instructed the commissioners who conducted the 1751 conference with the Indians, "to avoid controversy about lands."<sup>69</sup> He referred to a new subject of

<sup>67</sup> La Jonquière to the Minister, *Arch. des Colonies*, vol. 97, Sept. 19, 1751; cited in Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites . . . XVIII<sup>e</sup>me siècle*, II, 148. The incident happened Aug. 3/14, and La Jonquière's letter to the Minister was written only five weeks later.

<sup>68</sup> Bradbury to Phips, Aug. 13, 1751, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII; cf. also *ibid.*, 410, 426.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIII, 410.



contention which had arisen with the Norridgewok Indians, and which was destined to play a unique rôle in the succeeding years. Together with other causes, it finally led to the expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries from the territory claimed by Massachusetts. This land development was one phase of the traditional New England policy of planting settlers on disputed territories, in order the better to secure New England's claim to them.

The Falmouth Treaty with the Indians (of October, 1749) had not yet been finally made, although it was in preparation, when (September 21, 1749) a land company was formed to purchase and develop the old Plymouth rights along the Kennebec River. A month after the Indian Treaty of Falmouth was signed, this company voted (November 29th) to lay out a township next to *Commeseconti*, that is, on the west side of the river Kennebec about six miles below Cushnock (Augusta) and about eleven or twelve miles above Richmond Fort. Working in combination with the Government, the land company encouraged "industrious and well-disposed Protestant foreigners," especially Germans, to settle on their lands.<sup>70</sup> They began their first township on the eastern side opposite Fort Richmond, and called it Frankfort, in honor of the colonists from Germany.

This land affair was bound to come up at the Indian conference of 1752, and was indeed its main matter of discussion. The Indians were willing to "bury the mischief" that had arisen from the murder case, and desired to avoid further friction by preventing a larger English expansion. "The lands we own [they said], let us enjoy, and let nobody take them from us. We said the same to those of our own religion, the French. Although we are a black people, yet God hath planted us here. God gave us this land and we will keep it. . . ." The English promised "justice," and in due time the matter was brought to the Legislature.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> 2 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, X, 204; *Kennebec Purchase Papers*, in *Arch. Maine Hist. Soc.*; *Mass. Arch.*, vol. 43, Jan. 3, 1749/50; *New England Quarterly*, XII (1939), 241 ff.

<sup>71</sup> 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, V, 168 ff.; *House Journal*, Dec. 14, 1752; *Kennebec Purchase Papers*.

By this time twenty-five Narrantuak families, assured by the renewed treaty, had returned to their homes. They brought with them their new missionary, Father Pierre Audran, S.J. This priest was, at that time, some thirty-two years of age. In August, 1752, he had been sent to the St. John River mission to replace Father Charles Germain; but when the Jesuit Superior decided to keep the latter at his post, Father Audran was free to go to Maine,<sup>72</sup> to satisfy the insistent request of the Indians.<sup>73</sup>

When the Norridgewoks returned, they at once held a council on the land question and addressed a letter about it to the Governor, but they got no satisfaction.<sup>74</sup> By the early part of July some members of both Indian tribes, dissatisfied with the Legislature's decision on the Kennebec lands, took common action about a settlement. They both wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Phips on the matter.

This was the situation, when Governor Shirley returned to Boston on August 6, 1753. He had been in Paris as one of the English commissioners on settlement of the French-English boundaries in North America, and had stubbornly resisted any compromise on the English claims. On his return to New England, he pronounced an accommodation with the French difficult, asserting that "*the sword must settle the controversy, [and] that it ought to be done without delay*; otherwise the French would make themselves too strong for all the force the English could bring against them."<sup>75</sup>

Within a week after his arrival he took up the Indian affairs, thereby entering upon a matter that touched the whole boundary question. The Indians opposed any English extension above Richmond on the Kennebec; the French denied the

<sup>72</sup> Father Audran was born Oct. 22, 1721, at Péret, in the diocese of Béziers in France; he entered the Society of Jesus on Oct. 14, 1737, at Toulouse. He arrived in Canada in June, 1752 (Melançon, *Liste*, p. 9).

<sup>73</sup> *Mémoire of 1753*, in *Canada-Français*, III, 1890; Rochemonteix, *op. cit.*, II, 101, n.; Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu to Minister, March 28, 1755, in *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*, V. G., IV, 130; Duquesne to the Minister, Oct. 31, 1753, in *Corr. Gen.*, Canada, C 11, vol. 99, fol. 114.

<sup>74</sup> Lithgow to Governor, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 445, 446.

<sup>75</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 11.

English right to extend eastward from the Kennebec. The Kennebec Company was doing both. On August 11th, Governor Shirley answered the Indians' letters that had been sent to Lieutenant-Governor Phips. He informed the tribes of his return and of his inability to meet them personally, but of his intention to "send Commissioners to them as early as possible with the presents which this Government hath agreed to distribute annually among you, so long as you shall maintain good faith and friendliness with it." <sup>76</sup>

The Indians answered that letter with a polite acceptance. At the very same time Father Gounon, fully conscious of the seriousness of the land question and hoping to prevent an open clash about it between the Indians and the English, wrote a letter to Governor Shirley:

The Peace and Love of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sir, I understand that you desire to treat with the Indians of Pannauompsqui: allow me to beg that you will make no further mention of this interview, since [some of] the Indians being away either hunting or travelling, it is impossible for *all* of them to attend a Conference and [meanwhile] jealousy might lead some individual to make a false step. I had great difficulty during the last Conference to prevent the jealousy of those who were not present from having a very bad result.

The surest method of securing peace between you and the Indians would be to conceal your wishes. I will take care to acquaint you with those of the Indians. I only pray that, should you deem it advisable to make use of me and of my intelligence, we should act as secretly as possible, for my chief desire is to preserve the existing peace. I shall do all in my power to attain this end, being no more in the service of the King of France than of the King of England.<sup>77</sup>

This letter Father Gounon sent to Governor Shirley through some English intermediary, probably Captain Bradbury. At the same time the Jesuit "assured [Bradbury] that a War would

<sup>76</sup> Referred to in Shirley to Indians, Sept. 18, 1753 (*infra*, note 81).

<sup>77</sup> Father S. Peter Gounon, S.J., at Penobscot, to Shirley, Aug. 25, 1753, *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 450.

break out between [France and England] and between the Indians and the English," and the Jesuit urged the Englishman to write to the Governor, to prevent the commissioners from coming to treat with the Indians; he also made the Englishman promise not to inform the Indians either of what he, the Jesuit, said, or of the fact that he had written to the Governor.<sup>78</sup>

The situation was not unlike that of two years before, when Captain Bradbury had harbored his unjust suspicion of the Jesuit's motives. On this new occasion the Governor, on receiving the Jesuit's letter and the Englishman's communication, gave voice to an almost identical suspicion, despite the fact that he himself was very certain about the inevitable outbreak of Anglo-French hostilities.

He had summoned the General Court for a short meeting, at which he recommended an immediate conference with the Indians and an especially large grant for presents to satisfy them. He continued with a statement about the Jesuit's letter, and declared: "there is good reason to believe that the French are using artifices to prevent the measures concerted by this government for preserving a disposition in the before-mentioned Indians, to maintain peace and friendship with us, from taking effect." <sup>79</sup>

The Legislature voted the conference and the sum of five hundred pounds for the purchase of presents for the Indians.<sup>80</sup>

The commissioners who met the Penobscots first at St. George's on September 20, 1753, and the Narantuaiks in their own village a week later, harped on the now famous secret letter, written by the Jesuit. They also produced a letter from Shirley, which boldly denied that there was any thought of a Franco-British war, and accused the Jesuit of using *artifice* to prevent continued peace between the Indians and Massachusetts. They also stressed Shirley's statement that the priest would prevent the Indians from receiving the large presents designed for them by this Government. They concluded at Penobscot: "It is evident that your Jesuit makes no more of

<sup>78</sup> Shirley to Indians, Sept. 18; see *infra*, note 81.

<sup>79</sup> Shirley to General Court, Sept. 5, 1753.

<sup>80</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 450.



you than . . . a parcel of misqueters." They must have been altogether surprised at the Indians' reply: "You must not mind him no more than trash." When the commissioners followed this up by the suggestion, "Our ministers preach peace . . . and are men of truth. Shall the Government send such a one to you?" the Indians made no reply.

At Norridgewok, it was the same. The Indians said, "Do not mind anything the Jesuit says; we know it is peace all over the world. We want no Jesuits to meddle with treaties. . . ." They turned abruptly to the land question, about which the commissioners had already spoken along the same old lines.

You don't pretend to deny that the purchases made by the English were fair and honest? . . .

*Indians:* We should be glad to know how much Money was paid for these Lands. You say that you have bought them.

*Commissioners:* No doubt they had the full value of them; the Deeds say so.

*Indians:* What is the reason the Sum they were sold for was not mentioned in the Deed?

*Commissioners:* It was the custom among the English in that Day not to mention any Sum, but he that sold the Land acknowledged he was satisfied and contented. . . .<sup>81</sup>

So, the conference ended, but not the controversy. That would be settled by force of arms.

In late November that year, before the 26th, Shirley received a letter from the Earl of Holderness, under date of August 28, 1753, which he laid before the General Court on December 5th. The letter's contents were almost prophetic about what might happen. It was the equivalent of an order to Shirley to use armed force to gain control of the disputed territory on the Nova Scotia Isthmus, in the St. John River district, and in the territory in Maine eastward of the Kennebec. That Shirley recognized this meaning is shown by his reply to Holderness, dated January 7, 1754.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Conference held at St. George's . . . Sept., 1753 (Boston, 1753), in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*.

<sup>82</sup> Lincoln, *Corr. of Shirley*, II, 12, 22, 23.

Beginning with the New Year, Shirley rapidly received testimony about many encroachments made by the French on "English territory in Massachusetts." It was said, first, that a considerable number of French had settled upon a notable carrying-place which united the Kennebec and the Chaudière Rivers; next, that the Indians had accorded these French certain hunting rights in return for the service they would give the Indians in war with the English; thirdly, that the French priest of the Kennebec appeared to be continually using artifices intended to excite the Indians to prevent the English settlements being extended higher up and to set them at variance with the English and dispose them to a war this spring; next, that this same French priest "hath been very inquisitive after Roman Catholic families [in Frankfort] & used endeavours to draw off some of the inhabitants into the service of the French, particularly for building a chapel & a dwelling-house for himself upon that river, and been very industrious to persuade them that it was within the French territories." <sup>83</sup> All these rumors and evidences Shirley, in due time, set forth to the General Court, urging it to "raise forces for the defense of Massachusetts against the French." <sup>84</sup>

At this point may properly be introduced John Adams' later idea of the Governor: "Shirley was a crafty, busy, ambitious, intriguing, enterprising man; and having mounted, no matter by what means, to the chair of this province, he saw in a young, growing country, vast projects of ambition opening before his eyes, and conceived great designs of aggrandizing himself, his family, and his friends." <sup>85</sup>

It is certain that Father Audran wrote a letter to Governor Shirley on January 4, 1754. <sup>86</sup> Its contents are unknown; but that it contained nothing which could be used against the Jesuit is certain from Shirley's silence about it in the Legislature. On February 1, 1754, some Indians at Fort Richmond dictated a letter to the Governor, and wanted an early confer-

<sup>83</sup> Shirley to General Court, March 28, 1754, *Baxter Mss.*, XII, 246; *Mass. Council Records*, Feb. 4, 8, 1754.

<sup>84</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XII, 247, March 28, 1754.

<sup>85</sup> J. Adams, *Works*, III, 19.

<sup>86</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 1747-1755, Feb. 4, Feb. 8, 1754.

ence with him, especially about the making of "settlements so high up the Kennebec River, as some [English] have lately talked of doing." Shirley's answer was an act of war.

On the advice of the Council, given on February 8, 1754, he "ordered six companies to hold themselves in readiness to march up Kennebec River to the place where it is supposed the said French Fort stands . . . and should the Indians at Norridgewok be guilty of any mischief, he directed the officers 'to break up their village, and kill or take captive all they met with of that tribe.' " <sup>87</sup>

It is quite significant that, at this same time, Shirley had *caused* an extract to be made "of some Original Letters taken among Father Ralle's papers." <sup>88</sup> On the other hand, it is certain that there was no French settlement at the carrying-place. Nor was there any French fort near Crown Point, which also was exploited by Shirley in his efforts to carry through his policy. Nor was there any truth in the rumor, reported by Shirley soon afterwards, that Indians from Nova Scotia were about to attack New England.<sup>89</sup> What was true was the Indians' objection to the land company's development.

But the rumor about the French settlement upon the carrying-place, combined with the general impression of French encroachments and the support of the Governor's friends and of the friends and shareholders of the Kennebec Company, induced the Massachusetts Legislature to approve the raising of a small army and the building of forts on the Kennebec. Shirley's speech was on March 28th; the Kennebec Company suggested a fort on April 3rd, and the Legislature passed their resolve on April 9th.

An expert in Maine history long ago declared that the whole affair "was a ruse of the land company to induce the government to build a strong fortress near their most remote boundary," and that Governor Shirley knew "of the deception and

<sup>87</sup> Williamson, *Maine*, II, 297. Shirley's commission to Captain John North is in possession of the Maine Historical Society; its wording shows how exactly Shirley carried out the orders of Holderness.

<sup>88</sup> Shirley's Speech, *Baxter Mss.*, XII, 249, March 28, 1754.

<sup>89</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 13 ff.

avored it.”<sup>90</sup> It is more correct to believe that the land company’s interests and wishes combined with British political interests to bring about the issue.

In an Election Sermon preached before the Legislature, May 29, 1754, the rising young Protestant minister, Jonathan Mayhew, gave a stirring exposition of Massachusetts’ foreign policy at the moment. He mentioned the expediency of “large importations of [foreign Protestants]” rather than of other European commodities, more particularly at this time, because of “the probability that we shall, before long, have other employment than agriculture and the blessed arts of peace, for many of our own people; I mean, in curbing and chastizing the insolence of our neighbours on this continent.” He also mentioned the propagation of the Gospel among the Indians as part of this policy. “It is hoped that you will not neglect this [duty] . . . because they will otherwise be in great danger of apostatizing from their natural paganism . . . into that which is worse, the religion of Rome, a religion calculated rather to make men wicked than to keep them from being so.” He flatly stated that “all controversies about bounds and limits” would be settled by force of arms. The French and the English “must meet at length . . . The continent is not wide enough for us both.”

After a stirring description of the results of a French Catholic victory, by which “all liberty, property, religion, and happiness” would be “transubstantiated into Slavery, Poverty, Superstition, and Wretchedness,” he turned to a direct exhortation to the legislators not to be over-thrifty in this crisis.

Consider, then, Gentlemen, in the name of God, what you owe to Him and to your holy religion; what to the Protestant interest in general; what to your King and to Great Britain in particular; what to your native country; what to the honour of your Ancestors; what to the present generation; what to future ones . . . This surely is not a time to be saving, unless in our private expenses.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Wm. Goold, “Fort Halifax,” in 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VIII (1881), 198; cf. also Lincoln, *op. cit.*, II, 62, Shirley to Robinson, May 8, 1754.

<sup>91</sup> Jonathan Mayhew, *Election Sermon*, May 29, 1754, cited in *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VI (1889), 186.



In late June, the Governor and the troops went to Maine.<sup>92</sup> At Portland, Shirley conferred with some of the Indians, who again protested that the English were invading their lands, and who were plainly told by Shirley in return that King George was not asking their permission to do what he was doing. The troops moved up the river, but no French settlement was found at the carrying-place. The English forts were built and the Indians retired to Canada to stir up their friends for reprisals.

The Norridgewok missionary had left for Canada in early June, against the advice, it was said, of the Penobscot missionary. Of course, Shirley accused the two priests of having "redoubled their efforts to prevent the Indians from coming to the conference."<sup>93</sup>

He made much of a letter which was sent on June 4th by Father Gounon to Father Audran, and which Captain Bradbury had intercepted. This letter, Shirley declared, would show "the principles and intrigues of the Jesuit missionaries here, what lengths they will go to for the sake of saving one of their missions which is in danger of being lost to them, even such as would embroil all parties in war. . . ." <sup>94</sup>

It was in view of counteracting this Catholic religious influence that Shirley told the Indians at the Portland conference that the Massachusetts Government "are willing, in case you incline to send any of your children to Boston, to be at the charge of maintaining them there and having them instructed in the English language, reading, writing, drawing plans, and other things proper for their education."<sup>95</sup>

Finally, in his speech to the General Court (October 18, 1754) Shirley repeated his charge against the French missionaries of Maine, and then went on to declare to the Legislature:

I think it is my duty to observe, that it is a most unwarrantable Practise in the French under the pretense of Gospelizing

<sup>92</sup> In *Mass. Council Records*, June 14, 1754, "for the encouragement of volunteers to enlist . . . to penetrate into the Indians' country in order to captivate and kill the Indians of any of the tribes this Government *have declared war against*," rewards are offered for captives and scalps. *Journal of Proceedings at two conferences . . . at Falmouth, June 28 . . .* (Boston, 1754) in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>93</sup> Shirley to Robinson, Aug. 19, 1754, in Lincoln, *op. cit.*, II, 74.

<sup>94</sup> Father Gounon to Father Audran, June 4, *Baxter Mss.*, XII, 304.

<sup>95</sup> *Journal of Proceedings at two conferences, etc.* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

the Indians, to send their Priests into his Majesty's Territories . . . in order to Debauch the Indians there in Alliance & Friendship with the English . . . and engage them in Acts of Rapine & Slaughter agt. his Subjects. It is to the suffering of this, that we chiefly owe the Mischiefs and Depredations [which] we have for so many years felt from our Eastern Indians. And I think it is high time that some publick Notice should be taken of this Practise to the Government of Canada, expressing a proper Resentment at this injurious Treatment and I should be glad of your advice upon this matter.<sup>96</sup>

So the Jesuit missionaries' long-tolerated residence in Massachusetts came to an end. Massachusetts took over the disputed territory by force. The Norridgewoks went to Canada "carrying the hatchet to their brothers, the Abenakis, and to the Canibas of Bécancourt and St. Francis, who, in turn, sent it on to the Marechites of Ecouba [on the St. John], and these, in turn, to the Mikmacks of la Baye Verte, who, by the month of November, were holding council with the other tribes about making war on the English."<sup>97</sup>

The Penobscots stayed in Maine a full year longer, and Father Gounon stayed with them. In the summer of 1755, they were visited by an epidemic of smallpox, which prevented their making vigorous warfare on the English, and decided them to set off to Medoctec to pass the winter.<sup>98</sup> Father Gounon went with them. Neither he nor any other Jesuit returned, on the old basis.

<sup>96</sup> Shirley to General Court, *Baxter Mss.*, XII, 320 ff. (Oct. 18, 1754).

<sup>97</sup> Abbé de L'Isle Dieu to Msgr. Pontebriand, *Quebec Dioc. Arch. V.G.*, IV, 130.

<sup>98</sup> Vaudreuil to the Minister, Oct. 30, 1755, cited in H. R. Casgrain, *Extraits des Archives*, pp. 105, 106.

In the following summer, the Abenakis were ordered by Vaudreuil to La Bausse, to join other Indians in the war against the English. (*Report Can. Arch.* [1905], II, Appendix A, III, 180-183.)

By the 11th of October, 1757, Father Gounon was at Bécancourt, where he continued until at least August 12, 1763. He went from there to Cap de la Madeleine, across the river, where he signed a few records, the first on September 7, 1763, the last on October 10, 1763. He was accidentally drowned, on May 3, 1764, while crossing the river. (*Bécancourt Records*, at Cap de la Madeleine.)

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CONQUEST OF CANADA (1740-1760)

#### *II. The Acadians in Massachusetts (1755-1760)*

HARDLY HAD THE CATHOLIC INDIANS, with their priests, been driven out of New England in 1754, when the Catholic Acadians, without their priests, were driven into this territory. They arrived here in 1755, after a decade of suffering and persecution in their own land, due, in the last issue, to their being Catholics. Nor was their pitiable situation in that period the work only of English officials in Nova Scotia and Great Britain; it proceeded also, in large measure, from Massachusetts.

#### I

Precariously situated between the British on the one hand and the French with their Indian allies on the other, the Acadians had suffered not merely for racial or political reasons. In the eyes of a Protestant British Government, they could have wiped out the suspicion due to their race by changing their religion. In the mind of their French neighbors, their continued loyalty to Protestant Britain amounted almost to apostasy. Their professed political neutrality was not understood or believed by either of their neighbors.

Constantly accused of disloyalty and disobedience to the British rule, they were perpetually subjected by the English to the fear of losing their homes or their religion, or both. Their proved loyalty was disregarded and explained away as a mere cloak, to be cast aside upon a safe opportunity for revolt; they themselves became the continued object of subtle intrigues against their faith. Their religious fidelity was to be weakened by the admixture with them of "good Protestant" subjects, and of French Protestant ministers, and by bribes. This insidious

program was initiated by the Governor of Massachusetts to replace a cruder and, from a political standpoint, extremely objectionable project of expulsion. Their expulsion from the land, which had been a project of some English officials for over a generation, and which in August, 1743, had been suggested by the British Lords of Trade as part of the British war policy, was revived after the capture of Louisbourg.<sup>1</sup> At that moment the Acadians, despite their proved loyalty during the first year of the war, and despite the religious basis of that loyalty, feared the worst fate for themselves. By September 12, 1745, a report from Quebec described them as being in mortal dread lest they not only be deprived of their rights of property and religion, but also be transported from their homes.<sup>2</sup>

Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, likewise favored it at first, but later gave it up. The difficulty of its execution, its comparative injustice, and some unfavorable consequences, such as its cost and its strengthening the numbers of the French in France or in New Brunswick, weighed heavily against it. Thenceforth Shirley favored expulsion only in part. But total and partial expulsion plans included the introduction into Nova Scotia of "good Protestant colonists," such as Massachusetts had already at that time sent to Cape Breton (May 10, 1746).<sup>3</sup>

As for those Acadians who, under this program, would not be expelled, a policy of perversion to Protestantism was prepared. Shirley's most explicit statement of this part of the program was sent to the Duke of Newcastle on August 15, 1746. It proposed confiscation of the

Estates of those Acadians found Guilty of treasonable correspondence with the Enemy, pardoning the rest; building forts and setting up trade with the Indians; by which means, and

<sup>1</sup> John B. Brebner, *New England's Outpost* (New York, 1927), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *New York Col. Docs.*, X, 3; Murdoch, *op. cit.*, II, 79; Akins, *op. cit.*, p. 157 n. *The Selections from the Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, edited in 1869 by Thomas Akins, Commissioner of Public Records, contains no documents dating after June, 1745, until April, 1748.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln, *op. cit.*, I, 291; Baxter Mss., XI, 316; *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, 39; *ibid.* (1894), 216; Brebner, *op. cit.*, p. 129.



removing the Romish Priests out of the Province, and introducing Protestant English Schools and French Protestant Ministers, and [giving] due encouragement to such of the inhabitants as shall Conform to the Protestant Religion, and send their children to the English Schools, the present Inhabitants might probably at least be kept in subjection to his Majesty's Government, and the next generation in great measure become true Protestant subjects.<sup>4</sup>

Later that same year he advised that the public exercise of the Catholic religion and the admission of Catholic immigrants be prohibited after a few years (November 21, 1746).<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, Shirley had renewed the *partial* expulsion project. On July 8, 1747, he advised the military conquest of the Chignecto district and the transplanting of its inhabitants to New England, where they would be equally divided among the four New England governments.<sup>6</sup> The lands which the Acadians would lose would be distributed to the two thousand New England soldiers who, together with one thousand English, would take part in the conquest. This proposal was the first that named New England as a place of Acadian deportation. It answered the objection that the Acadians, if they were merely driven out of their own land, would swell the numbers of the French in New Brunswick. It also served the purpose of making even the expelled Acadians "good subjects" by dispersing them throughout exclusively Protestant New England.

In due course, the King's answer arrived, forbidding the execution of this plan at this time, but ordering Shirley to "consider in what manner such a Scheme may be executed at a proper time."<sup>7</sup> This order Shirley took to mean a continued

<sup>4</sup> Gov. Shirley to the Duke of Newcastle (extract in Lincoln, *op. cit.*, I, 336-337).

<sup>5</sup> Shirley to Mascarene, Sept. 16, 1746, Lincoln, *op. cit.*, I, 354. See also Shirley to Massachusetts General Court, Sept. 9 (*ibid.*, 346), where he significantly described Acadia "as a tract of territory upon this continent *nearly as large as Ireland*, settled with about 30,000 inhabitants, all French Roman Catholics, among whom are reckoned to be near 6,000 fighting men; the most of them were ripe for revolt and only waited a favorable or safe opportunity."

<sup>6</sup> Shirley to Newcastle, July 8, 1747.

<sup>7</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, 46; Murdoch, *op. cit.*, II, 119; see also d'Arles, *Acadie*, I, 131.

development of his general plan. In fact, Shirley's plan was the nucleus of the one finally followed, when the "proper time" arrived.

During these years, when the partial expulsion and the proselyting plans were developed, the Acadians had proved themselves altogether loyal to British rule.<sup>8</sup> All through the war years of 1744-1748, the Acadians and their priests gave an outstanding refutation of the Protestant calumny that Catholics were free to break oaths. Nevertheless, the very Catholicity which kept the Acadians loyal was the main objection to them.<sup>9</sup>

So affairs had stood at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which supposedly restored everything to the *status quo ante*, and which set up a commission to end the Anglo-French troubles in America by determining the exact boundaries of their respective dominions here. Governor Shirley was ordered to Europe to be the chief English representative on that commission. In that capacity he showed himself so intransigent as to prevent any just settlement by negotiation and to furnish at least the material cause of the deportation. He was absent from Massachusetts from 1749 to 1753.

During the same years, Massachusetts still played a prominent rôle in the Acadians' story, even though its Governor was in Europe. Its Legislature, engaged at this time in colonizing the disputed territory in Maine with "good Protestant subjects," still looked forward to the forcible expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia or "their reduction to a more perfect obedience to the British" Government's policy. Massachusetts came directly into the Acadian story toward the end of 1750, when Governor Cornwallis, of Nova Scotia, sought the aid of this Government in executing his policies.<sup>10</sup>

The legislative committee to which his request was referred reported, "not convenient or even safe at that time." But Sir

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Oct. 17, 1748, Akins, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 231 f. Note also his much more practical suggestion of providing Catholic priests "who should have at heart the promoting the British interest," at least preferably to the French.

<sup>10</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, no. 320.

William Pepperrell, who was chairman of the committee, saw "no reason to doubt that if the several other governments on this continent would join to send men to remove those vexatious neighbors [meaning the French neutrals], this province would very heartily concur with them. Certainly I for one," he added, "would do all in my power to promote such a design."<sup>11</sup>

In those years of Shirley's absence, the Acadians had to undergo the effects of his ideas. For the British Government put the Shirley plan into effect by founding a British Protestant colony in Nova Scotia (1749).

The Acadians then showed their opposition. Fearful of losing their religion, they demanded their own priests and opposed the settlement of Protestants among them. In the absence of assurance upon these points and upon their right of neutrality, they threatened to leave the country. Some of them did, in fact, leave to join the French at Chignecto. Then changes were rung on the plan, such as the introduction of Swiss, German, French, and Dutch Protestants, as well as English, and even the suggestion of seeking German or Italian Catholic priests for the Acadians, rather than French ones, a change of governor, etc. Four years were given to the Shirley plan, all to no avail. Suddenly, on March 28, 1753, the British Government instructed the Nova Scotia Governor that the Acadians "are not to be obliged to take the oath."<sup>12</sup> The British, disappointed in their hope of weaning the Acadians from the Church, had decided on at least a partial expulsion.<sup>13</sup>

Although Massachusetts did not then coöperate in a military way in Nova Scotia,<sup>14</sup> it did make public expression of its views

<sup>11</sup> Parsons, *Pepperrell*, pp. 239-240. Cf. Cornwallis to Bedford, March 19, 1750/51, "Word had gotten abroad in Boston that he intended an expedition against the Acadians and Mr. Phips sent me a very strange letter on this subject." *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894). Cornwallis had written his side of the story to the Lords of Trade, on April 30, 1750.

<sup>12</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894).

<sup>13</sup> Akins, *op. cit.*, pp. 558, 602, 607, 610, 615, 618, 634. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), April 29, 1749; March 9, 1750; *ibid.* (1905), II, Appendix N.

<sup>14</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, no. 324; Cornwallis to Lords of Trade, Halifax, April 30, 1750. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, no. 319.

on the point. Its Legislature appointed a committee to consider French diplomatic claims to the territory east of the Kennebec. The result was the Legislature's Address to the King of January 31, 1751, a document of the unmitigated Shirley flavor. It summed up neatly the official Massachusetts attitude to the French and the Acadians at that time, and ended by entreating His Majesty that "so dangerous a Neighbor *and such uncertain and precarious Subjects may be compelled to leave Your Majesty's Dominions* or reduc'd to a more perfect Obedience to Your Majesty's Crown." <sup>15</sup>

This address was sent to the Massachusetts' agent in London, who in a memorial to the Duke of Bedford asked, "whether it be not necessary that effectual measures [for such purposes] be taken as soon as may be." <sup>16</sup>

Official Massachusetts thus had its share of responsibility in that development which began to take shape as soon as the Anglo-French negotiations at Paris broke down.

When Governor Shirley returned to Massachusetts, events moved rapidly toward the solution by force. Before he left England in late May, 1753, he had been fully informed by Sir Thomas Robinson "of the necessity of removing the French encroachments in Nova Scotia, before a rupture should happen with France." <sup>17</sup> In plain English, that meant an English attack upon the French in the Isthmus and New Brunswick, without a declaration of war. As in the case of the Kennebec Indians in 1753, so with that of the Acadians, it was the Earl of Holderness' letter of August 28, 1753, that started Governor Shirley on the way toward this final step, which meant the expulsion of at least the Chignecto Acadians and their replacement by New Englanders.

Thus started what proved to be the total expulsion. During the winter of 1754-55, two thousand New England troops were recruited in Massachusetts. In the spring these were sent to capture the French forts in the Nova Scotia Isthmus and on the

<sup>15</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, vol. 6, Jan. 31, 1750/51.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 6:192, spring, 1751.

<sup>17</sup> Lincoln, *op. cit.*, II, 11, 62.



St. John River. Successful in this venture, they rounded up the Acadians of those parts, and later all others whom they could, and put them on vessels for deportation. They thus involved in a common condemnation at least the vast majority of a surely innocent people.

In preparation for the wholesale deportation, the three priests available, Fathers Daudin, Chauvreulx, and Lemaire, were arrested in mid-July.<sup>18</sup> Father Desenclaves, who was at Cape Sable, escaped arrest. Father La Guerne also escaped by fleeing to the French on the Isthmus.

The deportation, when it was decided upon and carried out, was declared a matter of necessity and self-preservation for the English. It has been defended as such ever since. Nevertheless, that explanation and apology run wholly counter to the facts. Neither the whole body of the Acadians nor any considerable section of them had ever been disloyal to the English. If some fifteen hundred of them in the Chignecto district had deserted the territory claimed by the English, they did so at the English threat of compulsory anglicization and enlistment as English soldiers. They likewise resisted the French demand to take up arms against the English. No known political facts furnish a sufficient justification for the attempted deportation of the whole twelve thousand Acadian population. The truth is that they suffered for their religion.

## II

The first Acadian *déportés* arrived in Boston on November 4, 5, 1755, when a fleet of six vessels, loaded with more than a thousand of them, put into this harbor. The ships were not destined for here, but for the Southern colonies; they put into this port for temporary refuge. Because of a severe storm their passengers had already been nine or ten days on the voyage from Nova Scotia, and were in a truly pitiable condition. Crowded on the boats, with more than the two to a ton allowance, some lay on the decks and some were ill; their allowance

<sup>18</sup> H. d'Arles, *Acadie* (3 vols.: Quebec and Boston, 1916-1921), II, 349.

of provisions per week was short and too small to carry them to their destination, and their water was very bad.

In their misery, some of them sent to the Government of Massachusetts a petition, which was at once transmitted to the House of Representatives, and at once acted upon. In quick succession, that very day, a committee of investigation was appointed, made its visit to the fleet, and submitted its report, substantiating the alleged conditions. This, the first direct contact of the Legislature with the Acadians, elicited the former's immediate sympathy. Involved as the officials of Massachusetts were in the Acadians' fate in general, their common humanity was aroused when brought face to face with it in particular.

The House at once sought to provide for the Acadians' relief and more comfortable subsistence. It was finally agreed to land so many of the Acadians as would reduce the number left on board to the proportion of two persons to a ton, and allow the others to proceed. Besides this action, the Legislature, which was about to recess, appointed a standing committee, during the period of the recess, to order and direct in the disposition of these Acadians, and of *such others as might be sent hither*, and ordered that this committee "dispose of them in such manner as may be least inconvenient to this Government."

A striking instance of Boston humanitarianism had been given during these few days by Thomas Hutchinson, who was later to be made Lieutenant-Governor and Governor. He had

been repeatedly informed of the distressed state of the French people on board the *transports* . . . and went down to *one* of the vessels, where he found divers of [the neutrals] in a perishing state from the hardships they had endured and among the rest a grave elderly widow, who had lain sick above a fortnight without any care taken of her. He ordered her ashore into one of his tenements and ordered means for her relief, but they were ineffectual and she died in a few days, by means of the neglect and hardships aforesaid. Just before she died, she begged, for the sake of our common Savior, that [I] would have some pity on her children, viz. two sons, two daughters, and a grandchild.

Their names were Benoît, and they remained in Boston, frequently applying to Hutchinson for aid. Other Bostonians also aided these distressed people.<sup>19</sup>

On November 12th, the first vessel of Acadians destined for Boston arrived in the harbor. It was the *Sea-flower*, commanded by Captain Nathaniel Dunnell, of York, Maine. This boat had been hired on October 14th by Winslow to take the overflow of a group from Piziquid. When it arrived in Boston, it had two hundred and six passengers, although it rated only eighty-one tons. The Legislature's recess committee sought advice on the situation from the Council; and the latter body "inquired of Mr. Benjamin Green, Esq. one of the Council of Nova Scotia, then in Boston, whether any Provision was made for the support of these people." The Council in consequence

advised that the several families be dispersed in such towns as may be most convenient to receive them in proper proportion, the Selectmen of such Town to have the immediate care of them, and to dispose of them in such manner as may be least inconvenient; and if any charge shall unavoidably arise before the next sitting of the General Court, that the Accounts thereof shall be laid before the Governour and Council.

They also advised that the new arrivals on the *Sea-flower* be disposed of in the counties of Suffolk and Middlesex.<sup>20</sup>

Other vessels, loaded with Acadians, soon followed. The *Helena* with at least 323 (men 52, women 52, sons 108, daughters 111), arrived on December 26th; the *Swallow* with 126 came in on January 4th, and the *Race Horse* with 120 arrived on the 16th. Each of the groups was cared for on arrival by the General Court's committee.

Thus, by January 17, 1756, more than one thousand Acadian *déportés* had been allocated a temporary settlement in Massachusetts towns, in Suffolk, Middlesex, and Plymouth Counties, and the town authorities had been given the legal right to bind them out, if necessary, for their support. Governor Lawrence,

<sup>19</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 23:207; Hutchinson, *History*, III, 30.

<sup>20</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Nov. 13.

of Nova Scotia, had made no provision for their care, and Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, was still absent from the Province.

In the next few days the House again manifested its suspicion that neither Nova Scotia nor the British Crown would pay for the Acadians. In this regard it expressly stated its own determination that, if support should prove necessary, it should be deemed not a town, but a Province charge. The House also, in order to strengthen their stand, even desired that the town officials cease the practice of binding out the Acadians,<sup>21</sup> but the Council did not concur in this measure. Both houses awaited Governor Shirley's return.

As soon as Governor Shirley returned to the Province (January 31, 1756), the legislative machinery was set in motion to obtain assurance about the Acadians' support. On February 7th, the General Court sent an address to the Governor on the point. It ran:

The receiving among us so great a number of persons whose gross bigotry to the Roman Catholick Religion is notorious and whose loyalty to his Majesty, the King of France, is well known, is a thing very disagreeable to us; but as there seems to be a necessity for it, we shall be ready to come into any reasonable acts or orders to enable and encourage them to provide for their own maintenance. . . .

The address went on to state:

We must acquaint your excellency that the live stock, the husbandry-tools, and most of the household furniture of these people are left in the Province of Nova Scotia, and that very few have brought with them any goods or estate of any kind soever. . . . Here they are a dead weight, for many of our own inhabitants are scarcely able to find employment sufficient to support themselves during the winter season.

<sup>21</sup> See House bill of Jan. 22, Jan. 24.

It must be emphasized that the British officials in Nova Scotia, and the authorities in this state used the utmost care not to separate families in the deportation and the distribution. Proof of this fact is found in the actual records of the distribution in Massachusetts. For example: the Robichaud family in Cambridge, the Hebert family in Watertown, etc., etc. (*Mass. Arch.*).



They then begged the Governor, in virtue of his position as Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in all North America, to see to it that Massachusetts might "be freed from any further charge" in this matter and be "reimbursed the sums already advanced."

On Shirley's evasive answer<sup>22</sup> both House and Council prepared to make provision for the permanent settlement of the Acadians in the Province. That same day the House passed a bill which was practically the same as those previously enacted for the temporary settlement. But the Council had other ideas. It wished to shift the inevitable expense from the Province to the towns. A two-week deadlock between the houses ensued until a compromise agreement was arrived at. The House won its main contentions — keeping the control and the expense in the Legislature. But it gladly concurred on the matter of providing tools for those who could work, and even added to this the providing of houses as well, in which the families could be kept together.<sup>23</sup>

If the Acadians were to be classed as immigrants, it is difficult to see how the Legislature, by itself, could have acted any more generously. Binding out was indeed allowed, but only in the same circumstances and with the same restrictions in which town residents themselves could be bound out.

From the Acadians' viewpoint, however, this was a very hard settlement. They were not immigrants; they were *déportés*. A year previously they had been a self-supporting people, resident on their own lands; they had possessed homes, farms, cattle, utensils, and all the rest. Now, robbed of all these, by a government of which Massachusetts was a sister and an accomplice, they were to be treated as paupers. The old and infirm faced the poorhouse; the young faced binding out; many thus faced separation from their families. And all of them faced the deprivation of their religion.

Some of the difficulties, industrial and domestic, which the Acadians encountered here were revealed in the next session of

<sup>22</sup> *House Journal*, Feb. 13, 1756, p. 331.

<sup>23</sup> See *Acts and Resolves*, of Feb. 28, and March 2.

the Legislature.<sup>24</sup> The fishing and coasting trades, and native labor generally, resented the competition of the Acadians. Although labor was greatly needed in this Province to replace the soldiers and those other inhabitants who were about to colonize Nova Scotia, and although the Acadians' laboring would reduce the Province's expenses for their necessary support, nevertheless, the House of Representatives passed a drastic anti-Acadian labor bill. On April 16th, it voted that from May 1, 1756, to May 1, 1757, no Acadians might travel from town to town in search of work, but that all of them should "confine themselves within the bounds of the towns where this government has placed them," unless they had permission. Violation of the law would entail arrest and commitment to jail until returned to their town. A second offense entailed either a ten-shilling fine "or a public whipping not exceeding ten stripes." This heartless piece of labor legislation did not pass the Council. It was put aside for further consideration, and would only obtain approval in August as a result of the war (and then in a mitigated form).

Far more burdensome to the Acadians was the already legalized practice of binding out their children. They literally stormed the Legislature with protests against this practice. One group of nine householders, living in Chelmsford, Oxford, Concord, Worcester, Andover, and Waltham respectively, put their case thus:

The loss which we have suffered from being deprived of our farms from being brought here, and from being separated from each other is nothing in comparison to that which we are now bearing in having our children torn from us before our eyes. It is an outrage on nature itself. Had we the power to choose, we would prefer to give up our bodies and souls rather than be separated from our children. . . . We by no means refuse to work for the maintenance of our children, providing that there be sufficient for our families.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The session opened on March 30, 1756.

<sup>25</sup> Petition of Jean Landry *et al.*, *Mass. Arch.*, 23:49.

The legislative committee appointed to consider this petition reported

that it should be recommended to the Selectmen that *for the present the said selectmen or overseers should desist binding any of them out*, that houses should be provided for each family so that they may keep together, if they see cause, till further orders; that those of 'em who are able to work support their Familys by their labour & that sd. Selectmen assist them in Giting Work & a *Reasonable Price for it*, and what may be necessary for 'em beyond that be provided by the Selectmen or overseers in such things as they may work up for Necessary Cloathing &c; and if hereafter any of them should be bound out, the Assent of Two Justices of the peace in the County be first had thereon, and all of 'em Treated with kindness and Humanity.

The Council accepted this report, but the House, after first amending it, finally rejected it.<sup>26</sup> So the matter of binding out remained, and the fate of the Acadians in this regard rested with the humane sense of the local authorities.

During the discussion about binding out, the House had voted to receive no more Acadians here because, besides involving expense, they were "burdensome," and because Massachusetts had "already received more than its proper share and some colonies had received none."<sup>27</sup> Despite this vote, which, with some amendments, passed the Council also, two other groups of Acadians arrived here shortly afterwards, one in May, the other in July, both in extraordinary circumstances, and both were finally allowed to remain.

The first of these two groups arrived in the harbor exactly a week after that vote had been passed. They came from Cape Sable, and were sent here by Governor Lawrence, pursuant to Governor Shirley's inquiry about what Acadians were still left in Nova Scotia.<sup>28</sup> They had been captured by a battalion of the New England regiment under Major Prebble, who, on their

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 23:50.      <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 23:58, April 21, 1756.

<sup>28</sup> Shirley to Lawrence, Feb. 13, 1756; Lawrence to Shirley, April 9, 1756; Akins, *op. cit.*, pp. 421, 299.

return trip from Nova Scotia, put in to Port Latour, "marched over-night and surprized the French people in their beds." The soldiers burned forty-four buildings in that place, but not the chapel. They did not proceed to Pubnico, the other village, whose buildings, including the church and the priest's house, were therefore untouched. Father Desenclaves, the priest who then served these poor people, also escaped, together with a score of other inhabitants, by seeking refuge in the woods.<sup>29</sup>

When the seventy-two who had been captured arrived in Boston on April 28th, they were forbidden to come ashore and were, consequently, designed for North Carolina.<sup>30</sup> The Acadians themselves thereupon sent a petition to be allowed to remain here. But the Governor persisted in his refusal to receive them. Finally, after the captain had made all preparations to sail,

there arose a great Dissention among sd. French & they all arose, forc'd their way on shore with their baggage, and it was not in my power [so the Captain reported] to proceed the voyage, as they said they would sooner suffer the pains of Death upon the wharff in Boston than be carried to N. Carolina; but were very desirous and willing to be sent to the northward or stay in this Province and work for their living.<sup>31</sup>

They were then allowed to stay "and be distributed into the several seaport towns between Plymouth and Gloucester, inclusive" and become, if necessary, a Province charge.<sup>32</sup>

This group, generally known as the D'Entremonts, could trace their residence in America back to 1610. They were descendants, on the female side, from the famous Charles de La Tour, two of whose daughters had married two sons of the Sieur Philippe d'Entremont, La Tour's first major-general.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Father Desenclaves to Bishop of Quebec, June 22, 1756, *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*, cited in Casgrain, *Sulpiciens*, p. 429.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence to Shirley, April 9, 1756, in Akins, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

<sup>31</sup> *New England Hist.-Gen. Reg.*, XXX, 1876, 18-19.

<sup>32</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, May 14, 1756; *Mass. Arch.*, 23:74, 76.

<sup>33</sup> Alice Wetherell, "New Stories of Old Acadie," in *Canadian Magazine* (1930), pp. 18-32.



In Acadia, they formed a kind of feudal colony, retaining the customs of their seventeenth-century ancestors. But now, robbed of lands, despoiled of possessions, and deprived of their religion, they, too, were become paupers in Massachusetts.

They were hardly settled in their new places along the seaboard when, on July 20th, another group of French neutrals landed at Sandwich, on the Cape. They had not been sent there directly by Governor Lawrence, but were part of the number that had been originally sent to the Southern Colonies. Their story is truly pathetic. Three hundred of these, having been permitted by the Southern authorities to leave for wherever they wished, had worked their way north in small groups, chiefly in rude boats which they built for themselves or bought second-hand. They had left Georgia together in March, indulging in the hope that they might work their way along to their native and beloved Acadia. Some fifty of them were able to get to the St. John River in June; seventy-eight others were stopped on Long Island by the Governor of New York, in August; ninety-nine landed at Sandwich on Cape Cod on July 20th. This last group had traveled in seven two-masted boats all the way from Georgia.<sup>34</sup> They were under the intrepid leadership of Jacques Maurice. They, too, were finally received here. They came up to Boston from Sandwich and arrived on August 8th, the day after Britain's declaration of war against France was published in the town.

They finished a total of some twelve hundred Acadians dispersed throughout Massachusetts, one fifth or one sixth of the whole number which the Government of Nova Scotia had been able to lay its hands on and deport at that time.

Out of a list of 1017, taken a few years afterwards by Governor Pownall, some 240 were children under 7 years of age; 187 were children between 7 and 14, "capable of being put out." Of those over 14 years old, 61 were over 60 years of age, 107 were incapable of labor by reason of sickness; 28 were em-

<sup>34</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, A, XVII; see also p. 151. They pitched camp on the ground of one Elisha Brown, and word of their arrival was immediately sent to the Governor. *Mass. Council Records*, July 23, 1756; Akins, *op. cit.*, pp. 301, 302, 303; *Mass. Arch.*, 24:63; *House Journal*, Aug. 14 to 18 incl.

ployed in attending the above. The remaining 394 were described as able to labor.<sup>35</sup>

### III

The formal declaration of war between France and England, made known in Boston on August 7, 1756, occasioned further embarrassments and sufferings for the Acadians. Not unnaturally, they became the objects of the usual wartime prejudices and suspicions. Those of them who had been placed in seaboard towns were removed inland. The 84 then resident in Boston were transferred to inland parts, as were the 32 in Charlestown, the 32 in Salem, the 24 in Gloucester, and the 37 in Marblehead. Even in this crisis, however, effectual efforts were made by the authorities to keep individual families together, or at least as near as possible to one another. Likewise, the war conditions brought about that restriction of their liberty of movements which had been unsuccessfully sought by native labor in the spring. They were compelled, by law, to remain in the towns to which they were legally assigned. The height of popular feeling at the time is clearly manifest in the story of this law, which had been amended, non-concurred, re-committed, and so forth, until its final compromise form was arrived at on September 2nd.

One cause of controversy between House and Council on this bill lay in the sanction attached. The House had insisted that for the first offense the Frenchman should "be set in the Stocks not exceeding three hours, and for the second [offense] be whipt on the naked back not exceeding ten stripes."<sup>36</sup> The Act, as finally passed, contained in place of this five days' imprisonment "without Bail or Mainprize." Another point of difference was on the length of time for which licenses for absence could be given. The first draft had allowed such license for longer than six days; the final form restricted it to less, and forbade any permit to include the Lord's Day.

<sup>35</sup> Gov. Pownall, *House Journal*, Jan. 25, 1760.

<sup>36</sup> *House Journal*, Aug. 27.

The General Court's orders for the removal of the Acadians from the coast towns opened up a whole series of petitions from other towns, also seeking removal of the *déportés* that had been assigned to them. Leicester, Waltham, Plymouth, Scituate, Newton, and Needham filed such petitions in rapid succession, usually on the basis that suitable employment for the Acadians could not be found where they were, but might be found some place else. It must be suspected that the real reason lay in the desire to be freed from the trouble of providing for them.<sup>37</sup> Petitions of the Acadians for better treatment quite often preceded the town's petitions for their removal.

From January 20, 1757, onwards, the House of Representatives also sought a solution of the expense problem by suggesting that all the Acadians should be removed from the Province. The House Committees on Acadian Affairs were usually appointed "to find some proper measure [either] to free the Province of the expense of their support or to remove them from hence." <sup>38</sup>

One particular incident occasioned a drastic suggestion. On August 13, 1757, the House, very concerned at the surrender of Fort William Henry to the French and Indians, had an order sent to the sheriff to keep a strict watch over the Acadians in Massachusetts.<sup>39</sup> A few days later, the Committee on the Acadians recommended "that such a number of the said inhabitants as his Excellency shall judge proper be sent to Admiral Holbourn at Halifax and the remainder to be transported to Great Britain." This report was partly due to one of the Governor's suggestions about the need of help in the war. The House was not averse to accepting it, especially because they had just been told that the French had most perfidiously violated the articles of capitulation at the captured fort, Fort William Henry. Non-concurrence by the Council prevented the House vote from becoming law and the Acadians from being impressed as British sailors.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *v.g.* Boxford, Nov. 30, 1757.

<sup>38</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 23:217, 328; *House Journal*, June 1, 1757, p. 407.

<sup>39</sup> *House Journal*, p. 449. <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 24, 1757.

On June 1, 1758, Governor Pownall, who had succeeded Governor Shirley, made a suggestion to solve the problem of expense:

Let the helpless infant, the aged, the infirm and those whose duty it is to attend upon them be supported in the same manner and under the same laws as our own people are. The price of labour will well support the industrious in this country; let that price be faithfully secured to them; let those who are able to work support themselves and their families: they will soon cease to be a burthen, they will become happy and profitable subjects.<sup>41</sup>

On July 26, 1758, the English recaptured Louisbourg. Shortly afterwards, the Acadians of Cape Sable, who, together with Father Desenclaves, had hitherto escaped capture and deportation, wrote a letter to Governor Pownall, of Massachusetts, asking assurance of a quiet possession of their lands. They stated that they were willing to take the unrestricted oath of allegiance to the British Government and to help maintain the war against the French King. They added that, if they could not be permitted to stay in Nova Scotia, they wished to come and settle in Massachusetts, "to live as the other Neutral French do, for we had all rather die here than go to any French dominions to live."<sup>42</sup> Their preference for Massachusetts as against any French dominion is remarkable, particularly in view of the fact that they were in correspondence with the Acadians already here; but perhaps all had the hope of some day returning to their homes.

The sentiment of Massachusetts in the Acadians' regard is manifest by the Council's advice to the Governor on this matter. They "could not be of opinion to receive these people into the province, even although [Massachusetts] should be indemnified as to all charge that might arise by means of their coming here."<sup>43</sup> When Governor Pownall informed Governor Lawrence of the incident, he ended his letter by the comment, that

<sup>41</sup> He also reported that Nova Scotia had paid the £395 asked on account of the 99 who had coasted up from Georgia.

<sup>42</sup> Akins, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-307.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.



the case of those "Poor people at Cape Sable . . . seems very distressing and worthy of any relief that can be afforded them. If policy could acquiesce in any measure for their relief, humanity loudly calls for it."

As a result, perhaps, of their own experience with the Acadians in this Province, added to British successes in Canada, the Legislature of 1759 took a new and important step in its attempts to settle the Acadian difficulties here. In January, 1759, it added to the usual purpose of its Committee on Acadian Affairs the striking clause, "and to render them good subjects." It also gave instructions to the Committee "to send for divers of the principal men of said inhabitants & hear their proposals in order to their accommodation for their future support."<sup>44</sup>

When the Committee reported (on April 17, 1759), it recommended that the French families who so desired be permitted "to remove from the towns where they are placed [by the court] to any other town in the Province, in order to procure labour or employment for their better support." All the French heads of families were to undertake the support of their children and their other dependents, under penalty of having the children bound out. The Province, however, would undertake the support of such aged and infirm persons as were not capable of labor themselves, and had no relation able to maintain them, and would also provide the rent of a house for each family, not exceeding three pounds per annum. Although the Council accepted the report, the House tabled it and then refused to accept it until changed.<sup>45</sup> It passed an order that the selectmen of the towns return perfect lists of the names, ages, and circumstances of all the Acadians residing therein, and of their capacity for labor, according to their best judgment. The mind of the House in this matter was evidently to bring about a new assignment to towns. This also was delayed in its execution until April, 1760.

<sup>44</sup> *House Journal*, Jan. 11, 1759. It is noteworthy that the chairman of this Committee was the Hon. Thomas Hutchinson.

<sup>45</sup> Oct. 17, 1759. By that date, the House knew that Quebec had been taken by the English. The fact happened on Sept. 17, 1759, and was made known to the House on Oct. 12, 1759.

The Acadians were then to be divided and proportioned to the several counties according to what each county paid to the Province tax: special regard being had to the ages and circumstances of the persons as well as to the numbers, so that no one county might be more burdened than another. The Acadians so removed would thenceforth be under the care and charge of the selectmen of the several towns and districts, and be subjected to the laws of the Province relating to the poor.

Many of the French were desirous of staying in the places where they then were, and gave assurance that they would support themselves and families without any expense either to the Province or any particular town. The General Court gave them this liberty, but insisted that they were to be adjudged the legal inhabitants of the places to which they were assigned. In fine, the French were become legal residents of the Province.<sup>46</sup>

This final distribution affected some 1100 Acadians. Two hundred and eighty-nine were assigned to Suffolk, 199 to Essex, 160 to Middlesex, 97 to Worcester, 60 to Hampshire, 61 to York, 41 to Barnstable, and the others to Plymouth, Bristol, and Duke's.<sup>47</sup>

The new distribution, while it helped to solve some of the Province's economic difficulties, served to increase the social difficulties of the Acadians. By breaking them up into smaller groups, and placing them at greater distances from one another, it rendered their meetings less easy and less frequent. And, as they used these meetings for religious purposes as well as social, it also took away part of what opportunity they had left for worship. They had been accustomed, probably from the very beginning of their exile here, to gather on Sundays and holy days for what they called *une messe blanche*. Those in Cambridge went to the house of Louis Robichaud; those in Salem to that of Simon LeBlanc; and others, likewise, in other places, to assist at what was able to be had of Mass without a priest. The chant of the Kyrie, the Gloria, etc., alternated with the prayers of

<sup>46</sup> See votes of Council, June 5, 1760, and House, Aug. 15, 1760.

<sup>47</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 23:328 ff.

the Mass, the lessons of the Epistle and the Gospel, and a selection from some pious book, which were read by one of *les anciens*. Many of them had known this custom in their homeland, when the priest was absent or when they could not go to church. They continued it here.<sup>48</sup>

The "ancient" also replaced the priest, in so far as he could, at marriages. This practice was officially recognized by the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities in 1761. At that time, Louis Robichaud, having kept in touch with some of his friends (Louis Petitpas and his wife, Marie Joseph Dugas) in Nova Scotia, learned of the permission granted by the Government there to Father Maillard, to exercise his priestly functions in that Province. Early in the year, 1761, therefore, Robichaud, who knew the priest personally, wrote to him an account of the Acadians' situation in New England, and asked approval for the "ancient" to be the Church's official witness at marriage. At the same time he asked the priest to obtain a dispensation from the Bishop of Quebec for two cousins to marry. Father Maillard obtained the necessary dispensation (dated Quebec, July 1, 1761) and sent it to Robichaud with a letter, dated Halifax, September 17, 1761.

I will not let this occasion pass, without letting you know how much I long to be near you and all the other Catholics, dispersed here and there throughout [New England] both for your consolation and my own. But, as it happens, we must be more than [ever] wholly resigned to the will of God and submit ourselves with good cheer to what he has in store for us.

I gladly approve your receiving the mutual consent, expressed by word of mouth, of all who wish to be married, as long as you do it in presence of the required number of witnesses. Be careful not to approve those who wish to marry within the forbidden degrees; and be sure to keep me informed on what you do, in carrying out this commission. I am Vicar General of this whole section of North America, and as such have the right to appoint a trustworthy person for receiving marital consent. And I do appoint you for this purpose for all

<sup>48</sup> R. P. Dagnaud, *Les Français du Sud-Ouest de La Nouvelle Ecosse*, p. 6, cited in A. Melançon, *Vie de l'abbé Bowig* (Rimouski, 1921), p. 85.

those who, residing in Boston and its environs [New England] desire to contract marriage, it being understood that you will keep a register of all those, whose marital consent you receive. When there is need of dispensations, you must notify me, because you are able to consult the Ecclesiastical Power, in my person.

The conditions contained in the dispensation to which Father Maillard refers evidently were at least two in number. The first was giving an alms, which was to be distributed to the poor. The second had to do with a promise to renew their consent when, if ever, they could do so in presence of a Catholic priest.<sup>49</sup>

Father Maillard's letter continued:

As we enjoy here full liberty to perform the functions of our holy religion in our oratory at the Grand Battery of Halifax, we have also the consolation of being able to reserve the Blessed Sacrament. We keep a lamp burning before it all the time, day and night. In order to cover the expence involved, I am writing to all our brethren, at Chignecto, Piziquid, Louisbourg and elsewhere, to share it with us, and thereby show that they are united with us to form one bread and one only body in Christ Jesus, who is our head. Please note that I write on this matter only to those who are really convinced of the truth of this great and awe-ful mystery — I do not address myself to the indifferent ones. Note also that I ask no set contribution, but only that each one give according to his means. A penny (un liard) given out of small resources with a good heart, for this intention is worth a dollar.

If, out of what I hope to receive from the devotion of the faithful, I could also furnish our oratory with clean and decent ornaments, I would be very happy, for I am unable by myself to take care of this expense. Please bring up this matter in your Sunday prayer meeting, and if you see that the people are well disposed to this good work, take up a collection for it, and at the same time, helping me for love of Him.

Every Sunday, not only do I carefully keep you in mind and

<sup>49</sup> See the form, for the marriage of Timothy Bourgeois and Anne Leblanc, in *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, A 208.



think of you as united with us in the Holy Sacrifice, but I also make express mention of it to all the congregation. Do you, on your side, do the same for us in your common prayers. . . .<sup>50</sup>

So the Acadians in New England awaited the peace treaty which had to follow British successes in Canada.

For the war had taken a favorable turn for the English, who, in the three years from 1756 to 1759, fought through apparent defeat up to the conquest of Maine and then of Quebec, September 18, 1759; and finally brought the whole conflict to a victorious close by forcing the surrender of Montreal on September 10, 1760.

During these years the Government of Massachusetts finally broke the spirit of independence of the Maine Indians and gained complete control of their lands. By the successful defense of the fort at St. George's against the Penobscots, by the massacre of the latter's ambassadors, suing for peace at the same place, and by the ruthless activities of Rogers' Rangers, this Government struck terror into the hearts of all the neighboring Indians. Although probably its treachery at Fort St. George's was responsible, at least in part, for the massacre of the English at Lake George, this Government ended the war in complete domination of the Indian lands in Maine.<sup>51</sup>

In their joy over the final reduction of all Canada, it did not escape notice, even of the clergy, that Britain and America would "gain the fur trade, cramp the French sugar islands, and cut France wholly out of the American cod-fishery."<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, the religious side of the victory was especially

<sup>50</sup> Copy in *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*, printed in *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, A 206.

<sup>51</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1929), 96; Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites . . . XVIII<sup>e</sup>me siècle*, II, 149. The Indian Church at Bécancourt was destroyed by Rogers in Aug., 1757. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, VIII, 42.

"The Mission of the Abenaki Indians at St. Francis was entirely destroyed by a party of English and Indians. They stole all the ornaments and sacred vessels, threw the consecrated Hosts on the ground, massacred about thirty people, of whom more than twenty were women or children." Bishop Pontebriand to the Court; cited in A. Gosselin, *Eglise du Canada Jusqu'à la conquête* (Quebec, 1914) III, 528, Nov. 5, 1759.

<sup>52</sup> Mayhew, *Two Discourses*, delivered Oct. 25, 1759 (Boston, 1759), p. 44 (*Harvard Univ. Library*).

prominent in Massachusetts' mind, as it had been from the start of the war. In 1757, the eminent Dr. Wigglesworth, Professor of Divinity at Harvard, commencing the series of Dudleian Lectures by *Some Thoughts on the Infallibility claimed by the Church of Rome*, spoke of the Catholic Church in the traditional New England manner, as "a restless, incroaching and implacable enemy to Protestants of every denomination," and referred to her "heresies, superstitions, cruelties, idolatries, and other crying wickednesses." He was greatly concerned that "the Protestant interest, both in Europe and America, is, at this moment, threatened by the sword of its popish enemies."<sup>53</sup>

The reduction of Quebec brought forth a paean of Protestant triumph. Samuel Cooper's Thanksgiving Sermon, preached before the General Court on October 16, 1759, upon this occasion touched off the universal sentiment.

Joy sparkles in every eye. Triumph sits upon every face . . . God has heard our prayers, and those of our progenitors. We behold the day which they desired to see, but saw it not. We have received a salvation from Heaven, greater perhaps than any since the foundation of the country. The power of Canada is broken. Its Capital is reduced, and the British Banners float triumphant upon the walls of Quebec. . . .

Here, too, the religious note rang out. In his mind the victory had been won over "an inveterate and implacable enemy to our religion and liberties; inflamed with Romish bigotry; perfidious, restless, politic, and enterprizing."<sup>54</sup> An identical theme was carried through the discourses of the influential minister, Jonathan Mayhew. For him the growing power and encroachments of the French here had, a few years since, greatly endangered "our religious as well as civil privileges." "For," he continued, "had [the enemy] at length got the upper hand, we should doubtless have been deprived of the free enjoyments of the protestant religion: harassed, persecuted, and butchered, by such blind and furious zealots for the religion of Rome,

<sup>53</sup> *Sermon*, p. 31 (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>54</sup> *Sermon, Occasioned by the Reduction of Quebec*, preached Oct. 16, 1759 (Boston, 1759), p. 46 (*Harvard Univ. Library*).

under the direction of a priesthood and hierarchy, whose Wisdom, to be sure, is not from above. . . ." Mayhew's joy at the English victory was, therefore, all the greater in contrast to the "time, not long since, when we had considerable reason to apprehend what the consequence might be, how far fatal to ourselves and the British interest in America."<sup>55</sup>

The Massachusetts Governor, Bernard, declared that "by the victory the future security of our religious and civil privileges is, under God, put into our own hands" (Proclamation). In fine, by the conquest of Canada, Massachusetts had achieved one of the two dominant purposes of its historic policy. It had driven French competition in the fishery and fur trade out of North America and it had won a victory for English Protestantism over French Catholicity.

The question of the limits was thus settled by force. The French were allowed no territory at all in this part of the Continent. The one hundred and fifty years' struggle for domination was ended, not merely between British and French, but between Protestant and Catholic. This British victory was assumed to mean a Protestant victory.

Because of this assumption little attention was then paid to the fact that, although the French surrendered their territory, they did not yield the liberty of their religion; in fact, they had capitulated only on the basis of being assured that liberty. That reservation would have a tremendous, although then unexpected, influence in later American history.

<sup>55</sup> *Two Discourses* . . . (Boston, 1759), pp. 47, 58 (*Harvard Univ. Library*).

## CHAPTER X

### THE CATHOLIC QUESTION IN MASSACHUSETTS

*From the Reduction of Canada (1760) to  
the Revolutionary War (1775)*

#### *I. Under Governor Bernard (1760-1769)*

THE YEAR 1760 marked a great change in Massachusetts history. It witnessed not only the final reduction of Canada by British arms, but also the coming of a new Governor to the Bay Colony and the advent of a new King in England. It likewise saw the definite beginning of America's, and particularly Boston's, struggle for independence. For in that year, at the latest, began the steady and final development in the people's minds and hearts of those ideas and principles which after fifteen years led to the Revolution. By the conquest of Canada the colonists were relieved of their ancient fear of the Catholic French and acquired a new confidence and self-assurance in dealing with England. And when they found that after the conquest, the Home Government sought a more extensive and firmer control over them than formerly, they braced themselves to maintain their traditional liberties. The consequent struggle was not merely a civil one, touching the extent of the King's or Parliament's authority in political and economic matters; it was at the same time a religious conflict, waged against the increased activity of the King's Church in New England. Vigorous resistance was made to every new venture of the Anglican body here, lest the traditional freedom of Puritanism from Prelacy be reduced or even threatened.

The Catholic element was not absent from this Anglican-Puritan struggle; on the contrary, from the beginning and in almost its every phase Catholicity was an important factor. This was inevitable, for Catholicity entered very largely into the Anglican inheritance. Furthermore, this particular controversy



had its immediate rise in the victory of a Protestant people over a Catholic people and in the religious opportunities and problems which ensued.

## I

In the beginning, Catholicity entered into the affair only as a material factor. Within three weeks from the final British victory in Canada, the Episcopal rector of King's Chapel in Boston wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury about the "noble opportunity" presented thereby of providing

a Fund for the Maintenance of two or three Bishops for North America . . . *quere* whether the Estates formerly belonging to the Bishoprick of Quebec, to the Jesuits and other religious Orders at Canada, be not more than sufficient for that purpose? . . . your Grace will see that the French at Canada have insisted upon being allowed a Bishop, tho to be nominated by his Majesty. Shall these forced Subjects, the Fruit of Conquest, be indulged a Blessing, which cannot be permitted to his Majesty's natural born Subjects? <sup>1</sup>

The affair of an Anglican establishment, thus revived, ran through the whole pre-Revolution period. It was mentioned by Jonathan Mayhew as soon as he noticed the great growth of Anglicanism in New England in 1762; it aroused the aging Chauncy to action after Mayhew's death; it was opposed in the Declaration of the Rights of the Colonies, drawn up by the town of Boston in November, 1772; Ezra Stiles spoke "of an irresistible, overruling Providence which would thwart the present endeavours of Episcopalians," in February, 1773; it only ceased to attract the attention of New Englanders when in August, 1774, they focused their mind on the Quebec Act and its favor to Catholics.

Besides the possible support for an Anglican episcopate, the British victory in Canada opened up a field for Protestant mis-

<sup>1</sup> Caner to Secker, Oct. 6, 1750, *Lambeth Mss.*, 1123, II, no. 205; cf. in relation to this whole subject of an Anglican establishment, A. L. Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (New York, 1902).

sionary work among the Catholic French and Indians. This likewise contributed to the pre-Revolutionary contest between Anglicans and Dissenters in New England. For, although both groups at first hailed the opportunity with zeal, both had abandoned it within the year. One declared that nothing could be done in that field until the British Government ceased hiring Catholic priests in Nova Scotia (for that government had employed Fathers Germain and Maillard as Indian missionaries); the other, that nothing could be done until the British Government set up an Anglican bishopric.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the Dissenters with admirable strategy stressed the new mission field as both an opportunity and a duty for the Episcopalians; their purpose was to force the latter to leave New England, where they were opposing Protestants, and go to Canada to oppose Papists.<sup>3</sup> The preliminary articles of peace between France and England apparently weakened or nullified that kind of strategy, as they contained guarantees for the unexpected continuation of Catholicity in Canada. The British King had promised "to give the most exact and most effectual orders that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion, according to the rites of the Romish Church, as far as the laws of Great Britain permit."<sup>4</sup>

There was no provision in the treaty for an Anglican establishment. The text, published first in the *Boston Gazette* on February 7, 1763, was confirmed by Governor Bernard on February 12th; within ten days the hitherto veiled controversy between Dissenters and Episcopalians began to be laid open in the Boston newspapers.

The intense campaign which followed sought to forestall the attainment of the Episcopalians' goal in New England. All available arguments were mustered — among them many which

<sup>2</sup> Mauduit to Oliver, March 30, 1760, *Mass. Hist. Soc. Miscel. Papers*, 1761-1776; Mayhew, *Observations*, p. 34; C. Chauncy, *Sermon on Separation of Rev. J. Bowman* (Aug. 31, 1762); Caner to Secker, Dec. 23, 1762, *Lambeth Mss.*

<sup>3</sup> Mayhew, *Observations*, pp. 103, 115; Mayhew to Hollis, April 6, 1762 (*Hollis Papers*, in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>4</sup> A. Short and A. Doughty, *Documents relating to . . . Canada* (2 vols.: Ottawa, 1918), I, 97-122. Almost the identical words for the Acadians in 1713-1714.

South  
End

Forever.



North  
End

Forever.

## Extraordinary VERSES on POPE-NIGHT.

Or, A Commemoration of the Fifth of November, giving a History of the Attempt, made by the *Papists*, to blow up KING and PARLIAMENT, A. D. 1588. Together with some Account of the POPE himself, and his Wife JOAN; with several other Things worthy of Notice, too tedious to mention.

1. **H**UZZA! brave Boys, behold the Pope,  
Prisoner and Old Nick;  
How they together lay their Heads,  
To plot a poison Trick?
2. To blow up KING and PARLIAMENT  
To Fillets, rent and torn:  
— Oh! blundering Peas, since the Plot,  
Was this Pretender born—
3. Yea, sure upon this famous Stage,  
He's got together now;  
And had he then, he'd been a Rogue  
As bad as t'other two.
4. Come on, brave Youths, drag on your Pope  
Let's see his *Beautiful* Nose;  
Let's view his Features rough and fierce,  
That Map of *Vulgineity*!
5. Distorted Joints, to huge and broad!  
So horribly drest up!  
'Twould puzzle *Newron's* Self to tell,  
The *D—*—I from the Pope.
6. See! how He Shakes his tottering Head  
And knocks his puffy Knees;  
A Proof He is the *Scarlet Whore*,  
And got the foul Disease.
7. Most terrible for to behold,  
He Stinks much worse than Rum;  
Here, you behold the Pope, and here  
Old Harry in his *Rome*.
8. D'ye ask why *Satan* Stands behind?  
Before he durst not go,  
Because his Pride won't let him Stoop,  
To kiss the Pope's great Toe.
9. Old Boys, and young, be Sure observe  
The Fifth Day of November;  
What tho' it is a Day apart?  
You still can it remember.
10. The little *Popes*, they go out Fir'd,  
With little *tenny* Boys;  
In Frolics they are full of Gale  
And laughing make a Noise.
11. The Girls run out to see the Sight,  
The Boys *cue* ev'ry one;  
Along they are a dragging them,  
With *Granadier's* Caps on.
12. The great Ones next go out, and meet  
With many a Smart Rebut;  
They're half'd along from Street to Street  
And call hard Names enough.
13. "A *Fogon*, Jew, *Albionian*,  
*Turk*, *Siranger*, *Wizard*, *Witch*;"  
In short the Number of his Name's,  
Six Hundred, Sixty-six.
14. "How dreadful do his Features show?  
"How fearful is his Grin?"  
Made up of ev'ry Thing that's bad;  
He is the Man of Sin.
15. "What his *deaden* Self could be  
Himself he turn'd to *Stone*;  
In Rage He'd tear out His *Pope's* Eye,  
And scratch his *Rev'rend* Hum.
16. He'd kick his tripple Crown about,  
And weary of his Life,  
He'd curse the *Rabbi*, and away  
He'd run to tell his *Wife*.
17. [Some Wits begin to cavil here  
And laughing seem to query,  
"How Pope should have a *Wife*, and yet,  
The Clergy never marry."
18. Laugh it you please, yet still I'm sure  
It shall I'm not alone;  
I pray *Critic*, did you never hear  
Of the *deal* of fair *Pope's* *Joan*?
19. "Hep *Joan*! see how I'm drag'd and scold'd,  
"Parj'd, *surround*, — *It* is  
"And when I'm bang'd to Death, I shall  
"Be *barbarous* alive."
20. *Joan* cries, "Why is this *Poison*, *Son*?  
"And why *surround* me?"  
"You surely must mistake the Cause,  
"It cannot be *Joan*."
21. "You Fool! I saw it with my Eyes,  
"I cannot be deceiv'd."  
"Yes, but You told me *that* Day,  
"Sight was not to be believ'd."
22. Affair'd, intrigu'd, and mad, and so,  
He mutters ten Times more,  
"I'll make a Bull, and say He *Cow*  
"That's *nothing*, *grunt* and *roar*."
23. Oh! *Pope*, we pity thy sad Case,  
So dismal and forlorn!  
We know that thou a *Cuckold* art,  
For thou'st half many an *Horn*.
24. And *clever's* *Head* we *have* also,  
"That's not one-quarry *thats*."  
"Horn he, who's *Pucker* pass,  
"And *Head* no less than *his*."
25. His *Pucker* full of *Heads* and *Horns*,  
In's *Head* he looks his *Key*;  
So down he bends beneath their Weight,  
With Age, Shame and Disease.
26. His End is near, each Cardinal  
Quite old hunk'd would teign;  
He *trots*, *stag* and *cough* that he  
Night his *Succession* reigns.
27. Now now, *Pier* *Pollex* to *congrat*,  
"Uxer to the *Mill-Dam* go;  
Buen *Homen*, Nothing first, and then  
"Fence, *flaw* the *Waves* into."
28. But to conclude, now what we've heard,  
With *Phonetic* give the *knock*;  
Be not *Pretender's*, *Papists*,  
Not *Pope*, nor *Carver* *it* is.

Sold by the Centers Boys in *Bury*.





involved the Catholic question.<sup>5</sup> It was charged that Anglicans were half-Papists; that they imitated Popery, cherished Papist ceremonies, preferred Mass to Meeting, did not properly oppose Popery, either here or in England; that they even tolerated "popish priests and bishops"; in fact, that Anglicans had no place in a truly Protestant country, and that to allow Prelacy more influence in New England was to open the door to Popery. Catholicity thus became again an issue in New England history. It was used by the Dissenters as a stick with which to beat Episcopalians.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the whole of his rather longish and bitter attack, Jonathan Mayhew, the Puritan champion, returned again and again to the theme that Anglicans were "half-Papists." He complacently labored the point that there was "no distinction amongst Christians except that of Protestants and Papists." What he declared himself mostly averse to was the Venerable Society's failing to attack Popery, and instead "turning their arms as it were against other protestants . . . and building up any one protestant church on the ruins of others."<sup>7</sup>

This was the type of argument referred to by one Anglican answer to Mayhew, when its author declared, "We have been treated with great obloquy by dissenters representing us as little better than Roman Catholics."<sup>8</sup> One of the earliest Episcopal answers to Mayhew, written by Rev. Arthur Browne, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, asserted that Mayhew, plainly alarmed at the increase of the Episcopal party, set out to inflame the multitude against the Anglican Church, by charges that "the English hierarchy is romish tyranny and the archbishop of Canterbury but another pope." He in turn made the counter-charge that men of Mayhew's spirit had commonly employed these same arguments in the past by calling the Anglican Church "Proud lordly popish prelacy! anti-christ! the man of sin, Babylon, the beast!" etc., etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Feb. 21, 28, 1763.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, March 7, 1763; J. Apthorp, *Considerations*, etc. (Boston, March 10, 1763); Jonathan Mayhew, *Observations* (Boston, April, 1762).

<sup>7</sup> Mayhew, *Observations*, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> *A Short Vindication*, etc., p. 82 (paged with Caner's *Candid Examination*, possibly by S. Johnson, *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*).

Spirits ran high and words were bitter, exactly on the point which group, Anglican or Dissenter, was the more opposed to the Catholic Church.

Mayhew also introduced the Catholic factor in another way by reviving the old thesis that the French priest might continue, even after the reduction of Canada, to be an emissary of the French Government. His words on this matter are substantially reflected in the British Government's instructions to the Governor of Canada to be on guard on this point.<sup>9</sup>

## II

Meanwhile, the signing of the definitive Treaty of Paris had brought the Catholic question before the Government of Massachusetts in a direct fashion. Shortly after news of the event reached Boston, in May, 1763, the Governor had to deal with the two Catholic groups who were resident in the Province, the Acadians and the Indians. The former had been mentioned by Mayhew as "a plain, simple, ignorant people, who have now no Romish priests or Jesuits amongst them, and by whom we are surely in no danger of being perverted from the protestant faith."

Up to the time when the Preliminary Articles of Peace became known in Boston, these unhappy people "had a strong persuasion that the King of France would never make peace with England, unless they were restored to their estates."<sup>10</sup> Their hopes, almost extinguished by the treaty, were relighted shortly before July 28, 1763, by word from their brethren in England that the French King was sending vessels to transport them to France.<sup>11</sup> This news was the result of a misunderstanding, because it really applied only to the Acadians in England. But it greatly rejoiced the Acadians here, and their leaders hastened with it to Governor Bernard. The latter, loath to lose so many people whom he knew to be industrious and frugal, thereupon took an extraordinary step. He advised them

<sup>9</sup> *Documents relating to . . . Canada*, I, 169, Aug. 13, 1763.

<sup>10</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 30.

<sup>11</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1905), II, 150.

to suspend their resolution to quit the country until he could receive authorization from London *for granting them religious freedom*. He proposed their being given "lands on the Eastern coast with the free exercise of their religion under a priest appointed by the English Government, they in turn being required to take the oath of allegiance in as full a manner as the papists can do." <sup>12</sup>

Long before an answer could arrive from London about his suggestion, the Governor received "under a cover, directed by Mr. Pownall, a letter from Jacques Robin, a French Protestant intending to settle at Miramichi [New Brunswick], desiring me to deliver two inclosed letters to Jacques Maurice, a French Neutral well known to me, tending to persuade him to settle there with the rest of the Acadians." And Bernard expressed the hope that many of them might accept the offer. He knew (although he did not say it expressly) that the Robin letter also promised them freedom of the Catholic religion there, with Father Manach, one of their former missionaries, as priest. He must also have understood, from Secretary Pownall's connection with the letters, that the plan had Government approval.

Bernard did not receive the official answer to his own letter of July 28, 1763, until January 7, 1764; and only then did he learn the explanation of the French offer to repatriate the Acadians. It had applied only to those in England, and not to the Acadians in America, who were still to be treated as British subjects. As regards the disposition of these, he was instructed to induce or oblige them to remain in Massachusetts for the present, but on no condition "to plant them, a Papist Colony, with an established Priest at their head, on any part of the Eastern shore." <sup>13</sup>

Even after receiving this official answer, Governor Bernard did not give up the idea of allowing the Acadians a priest. He dispatched a new recommendation for their settlement, in small numbers and not in a body in any one place. "But there again,"

<sup>12</sup> *Bernard Papers*, II, 83 (in *Sparks Mss.*, *Harvard Univ. Library*).

<sup>13</sup> Bernard to Halifax, Aug. 13, 1763; Halifax to Bernard, Sept. 20, 1763 (both in *Sparks Mss.*, *Harvard Univ. Library*).

he explained, "they would want an itinerant priest. And surely a British subject of that character might be found, who may be trusted with such a Commission." Bernard would "be glad to effectuate" their becoming British subjects, he said,

upon account of the value I set upon sober and industrious people in this Country. They have for some time past lived upon their own labour in the several towns in which they were stationed: the People in general are very kind to them and would be glad to have them continued among them; the only objection I have heard to them is that they lower the price of labour. *There is no legal toleration of their religion in this Province as in Quebeck; but a connivance at the private exercise of it would, I believe, meet with no exception, though a Publick Law for that purpose would probably be strongly objected to.*<sup>14</sup>

Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson also felt that there was no hope for the repeal of the law "which made it a capital offence in [Catholic priests] to come within the province." He mentioned, as the alternative, only the people's tolerance of Catholic prayer meetings, and thus apparently showed himself less sanguine than the Governor about "a connivance at the private exercise" of *priestly* functions among the Acadians.

The event showed that Hutchinson was the more correct in his estimate. The Home Government gave an unfavorable answer to the suggestion for an itinerant priest. Bernard received this by July 9, 1764, and had no other inducement with which to tempt the Acadians "to settle in a province," which he called "merely protestant." His efforts to keep them in British territory were henceforth pointed toward Canada, "more suitable to the biggottry of their religion, which is extreme."<sup>15</sup>

There is reason to believe that the Governor's conviction upon this point was the result, not merely of the official British

<sup>14</sup> The Robin plan had been made impossible by the objections of Governor Wilmot, of Nova Scotia, Dec. 10, 1763, *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 247; see also May 15, 1764, *ibid.*, p. 247. Furthermore, Father Germain had not been allowed to return to the St. John (Raymond, *Glimpses of the Past*, p. 147); and Father Maillard was not replaced after his death (*Le Jeune, Dictionnaire*).

<sup>15</sup> Bernard to Murray, March 14, 1765.



decision, but also of a recent demonstration of Massachusetts' antipathy to Catholic priests. For it was probably at this very time (early 1764) that he saw it exemplified. The incident is at present known only in barest outline. A rumor was being industriously spread around Boston, indeed the Acadians themselves called the Governor's attention to it, that "they had Catholic priests among them in petticoats, in the disguise of old women." The rumor, highly incredible in itself, was not believed by Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, who felt that no priests would venture to come here; but it served, so declared the Acadians, to increase the hardships under which they labored.<sup>16</sup>

The mind of the Legislature in their regard was almost as much economic as it was religious. Massachusetts had long sought to obtain from the English Government some reimbursement of the expenses incurred on account of the Acadians. When the Peace of Paris became known here, this Government had immediately instructed its agent in London to present this bill again; and when it learned of the Acadians' hope of removal as subjects of the French King, it drew up a further statement on the same matter.<sup>17</sup>

The answer of the agent, dated December 10, 1763, was received here in the latter part of February or in early March, 1764, just when Governor Bernard was still hoping to keep the Acadians here by a promise of land and freedom of religion. By the agent's letter, the General Court was informed that

it is impossible . . . to hope to obtain any allowance upon that account. . . . The Gentlemen of the House of Commons seem fully sensible that of all His Majesty's Subjects, none are so much benefited by the Peace as those of the Northern Colonies, who, despite all the expense they have been at, have not bought their own Peace and Security too dear.<sup>18</sup>

That letter was not calculated to bring the representatives of

<sup>16</sup> The petitions in the *Massachusetts Archives*, referred to by Mrs. Williams, *The Neutral French* (2nd ed.: Providence, 1841), p. 72, in support of this allegation have not been located. The rumor itself is referred to by Hutchinson, *History*, III, 32.

<sup>17</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Aug. 24, 1763.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, *Mass. Arch.*, 22:232.

Massachusetts into line with any British policy about the Acadians, and particularly with one which sought land grants for them and an exemption from the religious law of the Province. This latter they seem never even to have dreamed of granting.

The Acadians themselves, however, were not inclined to go to Canada, as Governor Bernard advised, even though their religion was guaranteed to them in that Province. They feared that "they should suffer more hardship from the French there" than they had from the English here. Thus they amply proved the sincerity of their former neutrality as well as the genuineness of their Catholic faith. They kept their minds on some French land; about one hundred of them actually succeeded in getting to the Island of St. Pierre, and two hundred others to Hispaniola. But the rest, having learned of the deadly effect of the climate in the latter place, finally determined on Canada. In the end all of them left Massachusetts. "Despair of the free exercise of their religion was a . . . bar to every proposal tending to an establishment" here.<sup>19</sup> Yet refusal to grant them toleration cost this Colony not only the economic benefits that would have accrued from the labors of more than a thousand honest, industrious, and law-abiding people, but also the gratitude that would in its turn have become a potent factor in the Revolution.

### III

The question of allowing a priest also arose at this time in regard to the Catholic Indians. The Governor had been awaiting the signing of the treaty of peace between Great Britain and France before entering "into a formal and final Treaty of Peace" with these Indians. As soon as news reached America that the Peace of Paris was actually signed, both the Passamaquoddy and the Penobscot Indians sued for this peace and opened up the religious question by asking for a priest.

The Governor seems to have answered these requests by the

<sup>19</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 30.

general statement that at the moment he had no priest to send them, but would later discuss the subject with them in person. As a matter of fact, he met the Penobscots in Maine on September 19th and took up the question of their having a priest. When they stated, "It is a Friar we want," the Governor asked, "Will no priest do but a Romish Priest?" and they answered, "No." Later on in the interview, the Governor made the declaration that,

It is our principle that all Christians should worship God in the manner that is most agreeable to their Conscience. But as the Priests of the Romish religion have always been dangerous Enemies to the Civil State of Great Britain, we have good reason to be particularly careful against them. Nevertheless, if it can be made safe to the Civil State of the Country, you will be indulged in the use of a Romish priest.

In the meantime, he would learn the Home Government's attitude toward allowing a priest for the Acadians, whom he intended to settle in Maine. If that were favorable, the same priest might serve the Indians as well. By early January, 1764, he had received his answer about the first Acadian plan, and knew that something else must be done for the Indians. It is not improbable also that he had been made acquainted with the English Government's determination to allow no more French priests to the Nova Scotia Indians. In any case, Governor Bernard tried the scheme of sending to the Indians of Maine a Protestant missionary, in the person of the Rev. Dr. William Crawford, who was appointed chaplain of Fort Pownall.<sup>20</sup>

The Indians, however, wholly unconscious of Dr. Crawford's mission, and taking literally Bernard's last words to them, that they might be indulged with a priest, made application to the Governor of Canada. They explained to him that "during the time of the French Government in Canada, they supplied the Indians with a Friar free of expense, and since the English Governor [had control], they had no benefit of any teacher. . . ." <sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *House Journal*, Jan. 14, 19, 1764; Bernard to Board of Trade, June 29, 1764, in *Bernard Papers*, III, 153, 159.

<sup>21</sup> Printed in *Bangor Hist. Mag.*, IV (1888-1889), 144.

The Canadian Governor replied, on June 26, 1764, to the effect that he was willing to send a friar to them, but that the request for him should properly emanate from Governor Bernard.<sup>22</sup> He thereby greatly embarrassed the Massachusetts Executive who did not intend to give the Indians any Catholic priest. He planned to send them an Episcopalian, and indeed tried vainly to have the Indians accept one. He made no impression in this direction upon them, but nevertheless he strongly advised the Home Government to try the experiment.<sup>23</sup>

As a result of Bernard's suggestion and in line with its own new policy in Nova Scotia, the English Government made arrangements in November, 1764, to send to the Catholic Indians of Maine the Rev. Jacob Bailey, already an Episcopal minister in that district. He took up his new duties there in September, 1765. The Indians, however, made little or no use of his services. They waited with fidelity for a Catholic priest, who finally was available in Nova Scotia in 1767.<sup>24</sup>

#### IV

Bernard's policy was in accord with the ideas long vehemently expressed by Jonathan Mayhew in his attack on the Episcopalians. These ideas Mayhew repeated in June, 1764, in another polemic, and here too he introduced the Catholic question, this time in great detail.<sup>25</sup> His masterly satire was brought to bear on the Anglicans' esteem and toleration of Popery, as a proof of their evident guilt in Dissenters' minds.

He had, indeed, been given a good opening by his opponent, for, as an instance of the mutual candor, forbearance, and moderation which prevailed in England among Christians of different denominations, the Anglican archbishop had mentioned the fact that "Popish bishops reside here [in England] and go about

<sup>22</sup> *P.R.O., A.W.I.*, 107, 111; cf. Sr. M. Céleste Leger, *Catholic Indian Missions*, p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> *Bernard Papers*, III, 168, Aug. 18, 1764; III, 171 ff., Sept. 29, 1764.

<sup>24</sup> Rev. J. E. Sexton, "Mass. Religious Policy under Governor Bernard," in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XXIV (1938-1939), 310 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Remarks on an Anonymous Tract*, pamphlet (in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*).



to exercise every part of their functions, without offense and without observation." The archbishop hoped thereby to reconcile the colonists to the toleration of Anglican bishops in America. But Mayhew replied with biting comment that if the argument proved anything, it proved too much: namely, "that we [Americans] should be content to see not only English but Popish bishops, freely exercising their functions [in New England]; the latter of which is not agreeable to our charter and laws." And then he went on to state the old Puritan thesis:

Although I am a warm friend to religious liberty in the largest sense; and though mutual forbearance cannot be too much recommended, where the differences are merely of a religious nature, or such as do not affect the liberty, safety and natural rights of mankind; yet I must own I hope never to see popish bishops thus going about, without offence in *New England*; being persuaded from the very nature of divers popish tenets, that Roman Catholics cannot be safely tolerated in the free exercise of their religion in a protestant government.<sup>26</sup>

Thus having defined his position, in accordance with the theory of Locke, the Puritan champion entered with evident satisfaction into what he called "a sort of digression," devoted to an attack on "the prevalence of Popery in England." For the composition of at least this part of the *Remarks*, Mayhew had the use of certain material, furnished by his friend, Thomas Hollis, in England. The latter, in a letter dated December 6, 1763, had mentioned to him his sorrow that Mayhew

had not remarked the strange impropriety of Episcopal propagators attempting the conversion of foreign Protestants to churchism, when their own people at home were perverting yearly to Popery by hundreds and thousands and ten thousands. . . . This is the sore of sores . . . by which to gaul (?) at pleasure and beyond expression our Prelates and Commendamists, when touched by a master.

He then gave to Mayhew *all* the material that appeared in Mayhew's digression, just referred to. From that time onwards,

<sup>26</sup> *Remarks*, p. 70.

the English Government's toleration of Catholics in England occupied Massachusetts' attention, and introduced another phase of the Catholic question in New England during the pre-Revolution period.

It is a fact that the House of Hanover had been increasingly tolerant of Catholics. George II introduced no new penal legislation against Catholics, and he made no spontaneous attempt to enforce the existing legislation. With the coming of George III, this Catholic toleration was enlarged. This King himself had been born in the home of the Catholic Duke of Norfolk, with whom his parents were on the friendliest terms. He had been brought up under the guidance of the Stuart Lord Bute, who was friendly to Catholics and who had as secretary "a member of one of the rankest Papist families in Scotland." When the new King came to the throne, he made Bute Prime Minister, and not only reversed the Whig policy of crushing Catholic France, but also increased the royal favor to Catholics in Britain.

He was even willing to grant freedom of Catholic worship in the newly acquired American Colonies, and to commit his Government to a relaxation of its anti-Catholic laws. By his promise in the Treaty of Paris "to give the most exact and the most effectual orders that his new Roman Catholic subjects" might enjoy freedom of worship, "as far as the laws of Great Britain permit," he implicitly agreed to an amendment of those British laws, and to at least a legalization of the existing toleration.<sup>27</sup>

It was in accord with this new royal policy that in April, 1764, an evidently inspired pamphlet appeared in London, written by a Catholic, and containing arguments for some mitigation of the penal laws. It bore the title, *Considerations on the Repeal of the Penal Laws against Roman Catholics in England and the New-acquired Colonies in America*, and was dedicated to "a noble lord."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> This explanation of the British policy gives a real meaning to the otherwise self-contradictory article of the Treaty of Paris. It is also partly borne out in the actions of the British Ministry.

<sup>28</sup> A copy of *The Considerations, etc.*, is in the Library of Congress.

The treatise was really an appeal to the British Parliament to adopt and extend the system of Hanoverian toleration. One of the particular reasons for its publication was the expedience of disposing "the minds of a great number of inhabitants of the newly acquired countries in America, to become willing and faithful subjects of the British monarchy." This could be accomplished if Parliament made "some additions to the wise regulations already made by royal proclamation" in their regard. The treatise also made a point that the Treaty of Paris' grant of freedom of the Catholic religion, "as far as the laws of Great Britain permit," was "a kind of original contract, under which the new subjects owe fidelity to the King of Great Britain." Then the argument indicated

that if those people are governed by the laws of England (as these now stand), . . . their minds [may be] full of apprehensions and anxiety when they consider that by these laws their priests, at least such as are ordained since the late peace, may be hanged, drawn and quartered, and that they [themselves], for harbouring a priest, are liable to the somewhat milder punishment of hanging and that, without proceeding to such extremities, they may be convicted of recusancy, and subjected to banishment, to praemunires, to fines, imprisonments, and a variety of forfeitures, and [that they] may be persecuted by any . . . who settle in the same colony.<sup>29</sup>

The anti-priest laws of Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, and the latter Province's expulsion of the Acadians, were also referred to in this pamphlet, and criticized as extremely unwise legislation.

This appeal for an amelioration of the legal status of Catholics, with its implied revelation of the British Government's favorable attitude and its direct criticism of New England's anti-Catholic legislation, was sent over from England to Jonathan Mayhew by Thomas Hollis. It was described by the latter as a "detestable" tract which had to be answered before the opening of Parliament. Hollis implied that what it stood for had the support of Lord Bute, and, therefore, of the King.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

"We are more and more scotified, and are likely to be [he wrote], for our . . . [king] is, by all accounts a Booby. . . ." He also indicated that the Anglican Church leaders were likewise in favor of the legal toleration of Catholics.

Jonathan Mayhew and some "gentlemen of good sense in Boston," to whom he showed the pamphlet, must have been amazed when they read the *Considerations*. One of its paragraphs had to do with the willingness of French Catholic priests in Canada and Nova Scotia to support the new British régime.

It also pointed out what would be exceedingly difficult for a New England Dissenter to believe,

that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a *Catholic* author, under the name of Doleman, and some others . . . endeavoured to prove that she and all other sovereigns *derived their power from the people*. Many of their arguments have, since the Revolution [of 1688], been retailed in pamphlets and newspapers; but they were opposed by the Church of England, which maintained the indefeasible divine and hereditary right in kings, together with the duties of passive obedience and non-resistance in the subjects; which long continued to be in a peculiar manner the doctrine of the established church . . . ; yet the words Popery and Slavery are often mentioned together.<sup>30</sup>

New England Puritans in general would probably have been most amazed by the statement in the *Considerations* that

whatever may have been the sentiments of [Catholics] in former times, I can assure your Lordship that I know none, but who *from their hearts renounce and detest the doctrine that princes excommunicated by the Pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or any other whomsoever*. And it is the opinion in a manner *universally held by all Catholics* that the Pope's authority is merely spiritual (except in that part of Italy of which he is

<sup>30</sup> Doleman. The book referred to was really written by Father Robert Persons, S.J. It was entitled *A Conference about the next Succession to the Crowne of England* (St. Omers, 1594). It was reprinted at London in 1681, ". . . by the extreme Protestant party in furtherance of the exclusion from the throne of the Catholic Duke of York . . ." Gillow's *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics* (London, 1885), V, 280.



temporal prince); and that in all other countries he has no power but what was granted by that divine Master who declared his kingdom not to be of this world, and who gave to his Apostle the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and not of the kingdoms established upon earth. It is now near 200 years since the Popes pretended to exercise this power [of deposing] which is a kind of tacit disavowal of it; and during this long period, I do not recollect an instance of their intermeddling in the state affairs of England; . . . only [that] one of them joined his interest to those who brought about the Revolution; and [that] the last Pope, Benedict the XIVth, exhorted the English priests always to speak respectfully of the established government. The various other accusations brought against Catholics arise chiefly from their adversaries determining what their tenets are and not giving them leave to explain their own sentiments. . . . Some persons urge their disregard to oaths and the most solemn promises, when the interests of their religion is concerned; but their being in a manner the only people who suffer for not complying with the oaths and declarations required by the Legislature is a clear refutation of that calumny.

Jonathan Mayhew and "the gentlemen of good sense" in Boston to whom he lent the *Considerations* were so struck by its contents that they could not believe it the work of any Catholic author. They considered it as "a Satire upon the present Ministry, by some Protestant Dissenter."<sup>31</sup> They probably labored under this misapprehension until the receipt of a letter from Hollis, dated March 4, 1765, in which he wrote: "The *Considerations* was certainly a serious and though impudent yet not unartful performance of a Roman Catholic. It ought to have been answered by the clergy of the Establishment but has not. . . ."

Mayhew was chosen that year to give the Dudleian Lecture "against Popery" in the chapel of Harvard College the next May. "But [he wrote to Hollis] it is but a small part of that mystery of iniquity that can be laid open and exposed in a discourse of one hour."<sup>32</sup> When Mayhew gave the lecture

<sup>31</sup> Mayhew to Hollis, Oct. 17, 1764, *Hollis Papers*.      <sup>32</sup> To Hollis, Feb. 9, 1765.

(May 8, 1765), he naturally enough made mention of the English Government's favor to Popery: despite the *Considerations*, however, he paid no attention to the Catholics' rejection of the so-called deposing power, nor to the Catholic assertion of the doctrine of popular sovereignty.

Instead, he gave a rehash of the "idolatry of the church of Rome," and then went on to proclaim that

there are other of her principles and practices . . . which more immediately affect the peace and order of civil society, the honor of princes, and the liberty and common rights of mankind. Our controversy with her is not merely a religious one . . . but a defence of our laws, liberties and civil rights as men, in opposition to the proud claims and encroachments of ecclesiastical persons, who, under the pretext of religion . . . would . . . reduce us to the most abject slavery. . . . Although we had no regard for true religion, yet we ought in reason and prudence to detest the church of Rome, in the same degree that we prize freedom. . . . Popery and liberty are incompatible; at irreconcilable enmity with each other. . . .

Coming toward the conclusion, Mayhew lamented the fact that

there is far less good old protestant zeal than were to be wished and expected. Many who call themselves protestants look upon Popery as an harmless indifferent thing, notwithstanding its inherent, restless, intolerant malignity and most destructive tendency. Heaven only knows what the end of these things will be: the prospect is alarming. . . . May this seminary of learning [Harvard College], may the people, ministers and churches of New England ever be preserved from popish and all other pernicious errors. . . .

In close sequence of time and often with identical phraseology, the then young lawyer, John Adams, followed Mayhew's attack upon the political claims of both the Anglican and the Catholic Church. It was the Roman Church system, he asserted, which chained human nature "for ages in a cruel, shameful and deplorable servitude to him . . . who, it was foretold, would

exalt himself above all that was called God. . . ." "Civil despotism," he also asserted, "was begun for the same purposes of tyranny, cruelty and lust which had dictated the canon law." Then he descanted on the confederation of the two systems of tyranny, and their banishing Liberty with her knowledge and virtue from the earth "till God, in his benign providence, raised up the champions who began and conducted the Reformation." <sup>33</sup>

The whole of these essays of John Adams could have been the work of Jonathan Mayhew himself, so similar are the expressions, so parallel the reasoning, so identical the framework. At any rate, together with Mayhew's lecture, they occasioned the apt comment of an Episcopal minister:

The Gentlemen in this Province are all in a manner professed advocates for universal toleration and liberty of conscience, and yet, in direct contravention of this principle, the Dissenters avowedly oppose with all their interest a Bishop's being sent over to America. . . . <sup>34</sup>

There was at that time no Catholic in New England able to make a similar statement about the Dissenters' even more marked inconsistency in opposing the toleration of Catholic worship in Massachusetts.

## V

While Thomas Hollis in England and Jonathan Mayhew and John Adams in New England were opposing both Prelacy and Popery as friends and coöperators in tyranny and oppression, a very notable development, of similar import, occurred in the observance of Pope Day in Boston.

For some years previous to 1765, the chief celebration of the British nation's "deliverance from Popery" had taken the form of a pitched battle between mobs representing the North End

<sup>33</sup> John Adams, "On the Canon and the Feudal Law," *Boston Gazette*, Aug. 12, 19, Sept. 30, 1765 (*Works*, III, 449-454).

<sup>34</sup> Rev. W. Gilchrist, Salem, cited in W. S. Perry, *Historical Collections Relating to . . . Mass.* (Hartford, 1873), III, 519.

and the South End of the town, each with the image of the pope at its head. These gang fights did not occur much on other occasions. It was thought that a melancholy accident which happened on the Pope Day of 1764 would have put a stop to them. In the forenoon of that day, while the North-Enders were getting their pope prepared, a little five-year-old boy was run over by the wheel of the float "that the pope was fixed on." Although the child was instantly killed, the rabble continued their preparations for the usual sectional battle. Thereupon the Governor ordered the sheriff and the militia to prevent them and to destroy both "popes." Nevertheless,

about eight o'clock in the evening, the two opposing forces met near the Mill Bridge, where they fought with clubs, staves, brick-bats, etc., for about half an hour. . . . In the fray many were much bruised and wounded in their heads and arms, some dangerously, and a few of those who were so curious as to be spectators did not come off so well as they could wish.<sup>35</sup>

The inability of the Government to control the mobs and the original anti-Papist motive of their battling occasioned the change which took place in the Pope Day observance of 1765. During the summer of that year the people in general were aroused against the execution of the unpopular Stamp Act, and on August 14, 1765, an anti-Stamp demonstration was staged by a well-organized mob. The whole affair, scenery, tactics, persons involved, all were identical with Boston's usual Pope Day celebration. The newly appointed Collector, Andrew Oliver, and the long-hated British statesman, Lord Bute, were held up to public mockery by being hanged in effigy and later carried to the place of burning. The mobs were soon after engaged in other riots, especially that against Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, which had similar characteristics; men, disguised as servants and negroes and carrying weapons, injured the property and threatened the persons of the prominent Tories. By November 1st they had quashed the execution of the Stamp Act here.

<sup>35</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette*, Thursday, Nov. 8, 1764; *Diary of Rev. Samuel Checkley, Pub. Colonial Soc. of Mass.*, 12:291 (1911); Bernard to Pownall, Nov. 26, 1765, *Sparks Mss.*, X, 1, p. 97.



And then the leaders of the North End and the South End gangs were brought together by "several gentlemen" and

reciprocally engaged in an Union . . . the chiefs engaged upon their honor no mischiefs should arise by their means and that they would prevent any disorders, on the 5th. When the day arrived, the morning was all quietness; about noon the pageantry representing the Pope, Devil and several other Effigies signifying Tyranny, Oppression, Slavery, etc., were brought in stages from the north and the south, and met in King Street, where the Union was established in a very ceremonial manner.<sup>36</sup>

The Boston Pope Day gangs were then united under the slogan, "North End Forever. South End Forever. Union and No Popery." Instead of fighting each other, they were henceforth to fight "Popery and its friends" in the persons of the Tory British Ministry and their agents here. This change was the more easily effected because of the opinions long fostered that Popery was tyranny and that Tories were at least half-Papists.

The movement toward changing the emphasis of the Pope Day celebration from its original purpose to a protest against England was so pronounced in the autumn of 1766 that the Ames Almanac for 1767, published as usual in the previous November, could hazard the prediction, "Powder Plot's most forgot." The celebration itself continued, but the emphasis was laid upon the tyranny of England.<sup>37</sup>

It was along similar lines — in order to keep the mob harassed for the propaganda that all tyranny was Popery — that a subscriber in the *Boston Gazette* requested the publication on September 5, 1768, of a quotation from an old almanac of 1697. The argument ran that the "Jacobite, whether Churchman, Whig, Quaker or Baptist, is a traitor of equal dye with the Papist."

From the month of August, 1768, until the end of Governor

<sup>36</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette*, Nov. 11, 1765.

<sup>37</sup> Viola F. Barnes, in *Comm. Hist. Mass.*, II, 501; cf. Ann Hulton, *Letters of a Loyalist Lady* (Harvard, 1921), p. 8.

Bernard's residence in Boston, the peace and order of the town were marred by organized riots which took their motif from the Puritan no-Popery celebrations. They put the hated agents of the British Ministry alongside the Pretender as "the friends of the Pope." Each succeeding Pope Day, from 1765 to 1768, had shown an increasing identification of the British Ministry with Popery.

## VI

During these same four years the British Ministry had carried further its plan to make good the Treaty of Paris. In December, 1765, the Government finally gave tacit permission for the consecration of the Canadian priest, Jean-Olivier Briand, as Catholic Bishop of Quebec. He was consecrated in Paris in March, 1766, and returned to Canada in June of the same year. Strangely enough, this epoch-making event brought no immediate word of denunciation in New England. Dr. Mayhew died in July, 1766. Hollis, surprised at the silence of Massachusetts, sought out another "fitted person to hearten-on," whom he found in the Rev. Andrew Eliot. To him he sent, besides books, certain "loose notes," which he asked Eliot "to read and destroy, burn, unseen of anyone" (September 6, 1766). Their content can in part be surmised from Eliot's answer: "I *am* surprised that we have attended so little to the settling a Popish bishop in Canada."<sup>38</sup> A year later, Hollis again incited New England opposition along the same line.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, when the American reply did appear, its main attention was still directed against the Episcopalians. Catholic bishops, it was said, were allowed in Quebec, because "they are provided for by establishments within that Province, made when the inhabitants were subjects of the King of France, and not at the expense of the British Crown. . . ." Even the legal existence of a Catholic bishop in British Quebec, therefore, was still of secondary importance to the possibility of there being an Anglican bishop in New England.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Eliot to Hollis, Nov. 14, 1766, *Hollis Papers*.

<sup>39</sup> Eliot to Hollis, Dec. 10, 1767, *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> C. Chauncy, *Appeal to the Public Answered* (Boston, 1768).

As the legislative session of 1768 promised to be decisive, the Whig Party did everything possible to swing the elections that year. Among other things, it introduced the religious question as a campaign issue. Most noticeable were three letters by Samuel Adams, published in the *Boston Gazette* (April 4, 11, 18) over the pen-name "A Puritan."

The continent has long been warned [the author wrote] of the threat to its civil rights, but I am surprised to find that so little attention is given the danger we are in of the utter loss of those Religious Rights, the enjoyment of which our good forefathers had more especially in their intention, when they . . . settled the new world. . . . I have been long apprehensive that what we have above everything else to fear is Popery. . . . As you value your precious civil Liberty, and everything that you can call dear to you . . . be on your guard against Popery.

These articles apparently indicated an extraordinary growth of Popery in Massachusetts. But the Popery directly intended thereby was not Catholicity—it was the Episcopalianism which so resembled Catholicity.

Bless me! [Adams wrote] could our ancestors look out of their graves and see so many of *their own sons*, decked out with the worst of foreign Superfluities, the ornaments of the whore of Babylon, how would it break their sacred repose! . . .

I did verily believe [Adams wrote in his second article], and I do so still, that much more is to be dreaded from the growth of Popery in America than from Stamp Acts or any other Acts destructive of civil Rights.

He promised to give a list of places where there was danger of "popish accretions." Charlestown had never been represented by a "papist," but it was "not so much on its guard against Popery" as it should be. Salem and Marblehead had been visited by a "Romish priest," who by his tricks and arts had caused "some to wander after the Beast," but they will soon prove that their conversion is complete and genuine. Haverhill had been delinquent, but "A very sensible and honest man, well

spirited against Popery," would in less than six weeks furnish overwhelming evidence that at least a great majority of the citizens were enemies of Popery. In York, some people had worn crucifixes, but the town itself could be relied upon to discountenance "such glaring appearances of Popery." Northampton was "a true blue protestant town." Hatfield was "doubtful, but was possibly the victim of misrepresentation."

These three articles were not religious tracts against any increase of Catholics in Massachusetts at that time. They were the "campaign stuff" of Samuel Adams directed against the Tories. The "popish" towns were those which elected Tory representatives to the Legislature, the threatened "papist conquest of Massachusetts" was the victory of the Government party at the approaching election. On the other side, the good Protestant towns were the Whig towns, and their representatives were those who voted the slate prepared by Samuel Adams and James Otis. These tracts are what probably defeated Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, who failed of election to the Council by only three votes. After the election this series of "Puritan" articles abruptly ceased.

## VII

It is significant that they made no reference to a Catholic bishop in Canada, nor to the increasing favor shown to the Catholic Church both there and in Nova Scotia, where the Government had again allowed a priest to the Indians and the Acadians. The earliest Canadian document foreshadowing this move in Nova Scotia is dated August 24, 1766. The Nova Scotia Government made formal application to the Bishop of Quebec in the spring of 1767, and the priest in question, the Abbé Bailly, actually arrived on the St. John River in the autumn of 1767; he was given "a present of Fifty pounds" and told "that on the Government's approval of his conduct, he might be assured an handsome present annually." That matter would occupy Boston's attention only later.

The St. John Indians were extremely pleased to have the



priest. The Nova Scotia Government also had reason to be pleased at the result of his work among them.<sup>41</sup>

Father Bailly also made a pleasing impression on the Penobscots of Maine, who sought his services in preference to those offered by the Anglican minister, Mr. Bailey. When they saw the priest on the St. John in the spring of 1768, they asked him to visit their village, which he called Passadounk. "I did not dare to," he wrote Bishop Briand, "for I am approved only for Nova Scotia and they are subject to Boston." But having been assured by the Penobscots that Boston permitted them to have a priest, he informed the Bishop that if such was the case, and if the Bishop would consent, great good would result from his visiting them, for "those whom he had met behaved as true Christians," and "their village was so situated as to make opposition to the sale of rum an easy matter."<sup>42</sup>

His presence on the St. John attached the Maine Indians "faster than ever" to the Catholic religion and did away with what the English commandant at Fort Pownall considered the "very fair Prospect" that had existed of these Indians receiving a Protestant missionary, in the person of Mr. Jacob Bailey. This change was, however, explained by him as "occasioned through . . . the Flattery and Artifice of the Romish Priests, who quiet and keep them in perfect security by a liberal Dispensation of Pardons of their continual Drunkenness."<sup>43</sup>

Certain New England Presbyterians, who had settled on the St. John River a few years previously, had a somewhat similar reaction.<sup>44</sup>

In Boston, however, neither Father Bailly's presence in Nova Scotia nor Bishop Briand's in Quebec aroused any direct opposition until late January, 1769. Even when Eliot wrote to Hollis on October 17, 1768, he did not make any reference to them. And this despite the fact that he mentioned Papists.

<sup>41</sup> Raymond, *Glimpses of the Past* (St. John, N.B., 1905), p. 298; cf. Father Bailly to Bishop Briand, June 20, 1768, *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*

<sup>42</sup> Father Bailly to Bishop Briand, June 20, 1768, *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*

<sup>43</sup> Col. Goldthwait, cited in E. Wheelock, *Narrative from 1772 to 1773* (Hartford, 1773. *Rochester Reprints*).

<sup>44</sup> Simonds and White, on the St. John River, June 22, 1768, in Raymond, *Glimpses*, p. 249.

Shortly after that date, however, something occurred to bring Catholic toleration in Canada directly into the list of New England complaints against the British Government. On January 23-26, 1769, the *Boston Chronicle* carried a communication entitled "Some Thoughts on American Taxation, with Extracts from two private letters on the Episcopising Scheme." According to this Hollis-like item, a "great plot . . . to ruin the Protestant interest" in both Britain and the Colonies was being worked out, not by Episcopalians only, but by the British Ministry under the leadership of "the Thane," in favor of the growth, not only of Anglican, but also of Catholic influence, and of French Catholic influence at that.

Why else has a peace been made to give the enemy [Catholic France] every possible advantage . . . Why has the Papist been allowed such insolent freedoms with the Protestant religion and the Revolution? Why has a Popish bishop been established in Canada? And why are the out-forts [*sic*] on the back of our American settlements dismantled and our people left exposed to the hands of American savages, whenever the priest shall have occasion for their bloody services. . . .?

This is the first directly hostile mention in New England of the British Government's official toleration of a Catholic bishop and a priest in the new-acquired colonies to the north. It is also notably the first time that in this religious conflict the Catholic question is placed ahead of the Episcopal one. This article, however, does not seem to have aroused any immediate public response in New England. Its ideas bore fruit only in the next régime.

Massachusetts was exclusively concerned at that moment in getting rid of Governor Bernard. The popular rage against him for his firm vindication of the royal prerogative "became at length so violent" that the Home Government judged it necessary to recall him. In April, 1769, Governor Bernard's recall was known in Boston. Even the Dudleian Lecture against Popery which was being prepared in Boston by the Rev. Samuel Mather was silent about Britain's toleration of Catholicity in Canada.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Samuel Mather, *Popery, a Complex Falsehood*, Ms. (Harvard Univ. Library).

On July 25, 1769, a week before Governor Bernard's departure from Boston, he was visited by a delegation of Penobscots who petitioned him to ask the King for a priest for them.

It is a long time [they said] since we have had any priest among us and if we are kept much longer without one, we shall become like wild beasts. We think it very hard that other Indian Nations in our neighborhood can have a Priest of their own profession among them and we are debarred of the same privilege. We are obliged to go a great Journey to St. John's River for a Priest to Baptize our children and carry our Families with us.<sup>46</sup>

When these Indians had begged Father Bailly, in June of 1768, to come and visit their village, and assured him that Boston permitted them to have a priest, he probably instructed the Indians themselves to make sure of the Boston authorities' consent. Therefore, the kind of petition which the Penobscots presented: Would Governor Bernard intercede with the King to take pity upon them, as he had done for the Indians of Nova Scotia?

On August 2nd, Governor Bernard sailed from Boston for England, leaving the Province in charge of Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson. Catholic matters had been sprinkled over the whole period of Governor Bernard's tenure of office in Massachusetts. They had been introduced into the conflict on the Anglican episcopate, and brought in their wake an ever-growing consciousness among Dissenters of the Home Government's pro-Catholic policy. The suggestion of allowing a priest to the Acadians had been put aside in face of the deeply rooted New England prejudice against any priestly activity here; and this prevented even the proposal to Government of a similar favor for the Catholic Indians. The possibility of British repeal of the penal laws against Catholics in whole or in part revealed the fundamentally Protestant concept of the Bostonians, that Prelacy and Popery were, if not wholly, at least practically, identical. It made them literally blind to what Catholicity itself

<sup>46</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:498.

really was, and more especially in the matter of royal rights and popular sovereignty. New England's Pope Day celebrations were an increasing evidence that in New England's mind the British Ministry were friends of the Pope and deserving of parallel opposition.

But the Dissenters here had not directly opposed the toleration of a Catholic bishop in Quebec. Recognizing as they did the fact that Canadians were Catholics, and that, in their capitulation, they had stipulated for the freedom of their religion, New Englanders as a whole had accepted the British permission of a bishop there as a matter of course.

And as the Canadian religious situation no longer threatened their own security, it caused them at first little if any concern. More especially, it involved them in no further expense. In fine, they were generally willing to neglect toleration of Catholicity in Canada. To them it presented itself in a completely different light from conceding the appointment of an Anglican bishop, with suspected and dreaded possibility of an Anglican establishment. Catholicity in Canada was no threat to the Congregational establishment in Massachusetts.

Governor Bernard's term was almost at an end before that sentiment changed. Under his successor, the Catholic question began to occupy a major place in Massachusetts history.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE CATHOLIC QUESTION IN MASSACHUSETTS

*From the Reduction of Canada (1760) to  
the Revolutionary War (1775)*

#### II. Under Governor Hutchinson (1769-1774)

AFTER GOVERNOR BERNARD'S DEPARTURE, the Province was in charge of Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, who, first as Acting Governor and then as Governor, was the representative of the Crown here until the very eve of the Revolution. Hutchinson entered upon his office under trying conditions. Opposed by what was really a well-organized popular government, which did not scruple to use mob tactics *in terrorem* for its purpose, he had only the unpopular royal troops to back up his own authority.

One of the first great crises he faced was the probability of a clash between the troops and the mob on his first Pope Day. The general opposition to the royal troops was in this case increased by their having many Irish and Catholics among them.<sup>1</sup>

On October 2, 1769, the *Boston Gazette* had almost predicted the dreaded outcome by declaring, "Surely no provincial magistrate could be found so steeled against the sensations of humanity and justice, as wantonly to order troops to fire on an unarmed populace and [more than] repeat in Boston the tragic scene exhibited in St. George's field." Reference was made to the riot in London of May 10, 1768, when the troops who were called out to keep order were severely pelted and in return killed some citizens.<sup>2</sup>

Hutchinson, acting in his capacity of both Governor and

<sup>1</sup> John Adams, *Autobiography*, in *Works*, II, 229; Hutchinson, *History*, III, 187, 194.

<sup>2</sup> William Hunt and Reginald Poole, *Political History of England* (Longmans, 1924), X.

Chief Justice, summoned the Boston justices of the peace and strictly charged them to prevent such disorders as had recently resulted in a tar and feathers incident, pointing out particularly the destructive consequences of their neglect of duty. And as Pope Day drew near, he also ordered certain paragraphs of the Province Law of 1753 inserted in the newspapers. When the day itself arrived, there was no unusual disorder.<sup>3</sup>

Thus passed the first crisis; but only for the moment: the inevitable clash occurred in the following March. Meanwhile, however, popular opposition to the British Government was nourished, among other means, by a resumption of the campaign against the presence of a Catholic bishop in Quebec. The Patriot Party, taking up again the note of hostility in his regard which had been sounded in January, began in September to make Bishop Briand the continual object of Boston's attention. In the beginning, this new campaign was still aimed only indirectly against him; his presence in Canada served rather as the measuring rod for American opposition to an Anglican bishop. If the English Government insisted on sending a bishop to New England, Eliot declared "it would be as acceptable to have his lordship of Quebec as an English bishop."<sup>4</sup> Almost as an echo, *The Post* assented:

Since Bishop Briand was in America already, he would be the most fitting, proper and safe consecrator of the first Anglican Bishop here.<sup>5</sup>

and again:

As Popery is making great strides in Canada; more Episcopalian ministers are needed there to offset this, or would they "rather destroy honest Presbyterians or Congregationalists than convert Papists and heathen."<sup>6</sup>

The change in emphasis became evident in November. Explicit details about the Papist priest, ordained at Quebec by a bishop of the Church of Rome, and appointed by Government

<sup>3</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Oct. 30, Nov. 13; *Boston Chronicle*, Nov. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Eliot to Hollis, Sept. 7, 1769.

<sup>5</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, Sept. 11, 1769.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 23, 1769.

as a missionary in Nova Scotia, at an annual salary of one hundred pounds for life, and actively engaged in celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, converting Protestants, rebaptizing infants, undermining Protestantism, followed in rapid succession.<sup>7</sup> In the same month all this was tied up with the great plot of "*the Thane*," to prepare matters for "another blessed restoration." The Tory doctrine of unlimited submission and passive obedience were again united with "the Roman superstition, the regular system of tyranny."<sup>8</sup> "There is certainly of late years a secret influence in the British court in favor of the Roman church."<sup>9</sup>

This continuous campaign of the Whig-Dissenters in Boston against Lord Bute on the ground of his pro-Catholic policy was interrupted in March, 1770, but only, it seems clear, because of the tragic event known as the Boston Massacre.<sup>10</sup>

This sad but inevitable consequence of the presence of British soldiers among the assiduously inflamed Boston populace also contained a Catholic element. In the "motley rabble" which baited the soldiers, there were, among others, what John Adams called "Irish teagues." The two regiments to which the soldiers belonged (the Fourteenth and the Twenty-Ninth) were from Ireland, and many of the soldiers were really, if one may judge from their names, Irish Catholics.<sup>11</sup> Their religion, as events proved, made them all the more obnoxious to the townsfolk.<sup>12</sup>

One of the five townsmen killed in the riot was the Irish Catholic, Patrick Carr. He had lived ten days after his wound, and during that period told the doctor who attended him

that he was a native of Ireland, that he had frequently seen mobs and soldiers called to quell them; whenever he mentioned that, he always called himself a fool, that he might have known better; that he had seen soldiers often fire on the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 13, 1769.      <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 27, 1769.

<sup>9</sup> Eliot to Hollis, Feb. 1, 1770; also *The Post*, Jan. 1, and 29, 1770.

<sup>10</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 194 ff.; Kidder, Frederick, *History of the Boston Massacre* (Albany, 1870).

<sup>11</sup> Cockran, Cain, Cunningham, Condon, Riordan, Hartigan, McCauley, Kilroy, Carroll, etc.

<sup>12</sup> *Catholic Address to Gov. Hutchinson*, July 29, 1771; cf. below.

people in Ireland, but he had never seen them bear half so much before they fired in his life. . . . About 4 P.M. before the night on which he died, he said he forgave the man, whoever it was, that shot him, he was satisfied he had no malice, but fired to defend himself.<sup>13</sup>

At the town meeting held in Boston in May, 1770, the changes were once more rung on the theme: "a deep laid & desperate plan of Imperial despotism has been laid and partly executed, for the extinction of all civil liberty," and on our "constitutional or charter rights," "natural or civil, political or sacred." And in the same document the British Government was denounced as holding "doctrines and political solecisms which may take root and spring up under the meridian of modern Rome, but, we trust in God, will not flourish in . . . America."<sup>14</sup>

At this time there was an increasingly frequent description of the Massachusetts Charter as "a compact" which must be interpreted on the basis of natural law. This charter, which, as is known, gave toleration to all Christians "except Papists," was increasingly appealed to against the British policy which did tolerate Papists. The latter was ridiculed as if Papist itself.<sup>15</sup>

The New England viewpoint was undoubtedly that the more London departed from charter law and natural law, the nearer it came to tyranny and to Popery. By the end of 1770 the thesis had been built up, in repeated articles, that the wealth, freedom, safety, happiness, and religion of Protestant New England were being unconstitutionally sacrificed by the British Ministry's tolerating Catholics in America (Quebec, Nova Scotia, Grenada).<sup>16</sup>

It was repeated as a whole in *The Gazette* of January 14, 1771. The extract ran as follows:

We are called by the voice of Divine Providence, which has been so often exerted to save the realm of Great Britain from

<sup>13</sup> Frederick Kidder, *The Trial* . . . (Albany, 1870), pp. 122 ff.

<sup>14</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XVIII, 26.

<sup>15</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Aug. 20, 1770.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 17, Nov. 5, 12, articles signed "Constitutionalis"; cf. *ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1770, faked letters, signed "Dick Vorrish," Dec. 31, 1770, Jan. 7, 1771.



arbitrary power, civil and ecclesiastical, [and] by the allegiance we owe to the Protestant Prince on the throne . . . to stand forth, as one embodied phalanx . . . in a steady and vigorous opposition to the plan of government, schemed and contrived . . . by John, Earl of Bute . . . in defense of our civil and religious duties. . . . This work [of Bute] is already begun at Quebec, and in the island of Grenada. . . . All who are conversant in history know very well what hasty strides Popery and Arbitrary power have always made, when they once gained footing in Protestant States. The first act was formed at Quebec, the second at Grenada: the catastrophe will soon follow. . . .

The article then set out certain analogies of the present with the Stuart days,

dispensing with the laws, particularly with respect to persons professing the Roman Faith, who are by law incapacitated from holding any office of trust or emolument. . . . Yet we now see a Roman Catholic Bishop established at Quebec, and a Romish priest pensioned at Halifax: in the island of Grenada two Privy counsellors, three representatives, etc., all Roman Catholics and Frenchmen, appointed and actually exercising their functions at this time. . . . All the penal statutes against popery are either totally neglected or relaxed. . . . The better to deceive you . . . you are told that the professors of the Romish religion have dropt its persecuting spirit, and that you need not apprehend the revival of Smithfield fires, or inquisitorial, ecclesiastical courts. Detested be the wretches who impose such falsehoods — persons professing the Romish religion, who are the ready tools of despotism. . . .

These were the days described by John Adams in his *Diary* as

a time when the barriers against popery, erected by our ancestors, are suffered to be destroyed, to the hazard even of the Protestant religion; . . . when so many innovations are introduced, to the injury of our constitution of civil governments. . . .<sup>17</sup>

On February 12, 1771, the *Essex Gazette* made the suggestion that the 5th of November, which had long been observed "in

<sup>17</sup> Feb. 12, 1771, *Works*, II, 252.

commemorating the Popish Plot and in bearing testimony against those sons of Belial who aimed at the destruction of our religion and liberty," should be replaced by March 5th, the day of the Boston Massacre: "a day of blood and slaughter! a day when five Americans were inhumanly murdered by the tools of tyrants . . . who after the example of the first Popish plotters, formed a plan to blow up all the liberties of the Americans. . . ." <sup>18</sup>

It was almost on the anniversary of the Boston Massacre that Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson received his commission as Governor.<sup>19</sup> In the difficult days that had passed since Governor Bernard's departure, he had been in charge of the Province; even previous to that date, he had already incurred the enmity of the radical Whigs, as an outstanding defender of the prerogative. Although born in the Colony and a Dissenter in religion, he had always been in favor of union with England, and was generally very well disposed to Anglicans. He had likewise shown himself most considerate of the pitiable Acadian Catholics. It was for these reasons undoubtedly that, as he himself said at a later date, "a certain deacon of a Boston church regarded his appointment as a move to introduce Popery into Massachusetts. The same deacon could never be persuaded by his minister that Lord North was not a Roman Catholic." <sup>20</sup>

The Boston papers carried on the campaign by a hundred criticisms of Governor Hutchinson, as if he were a Papist. Hardly a month passed without some example of this type of political opposition, even slightly hidden, like the shaft, "There is not a papist in the world, who would not cut the throat of his nearest relations, were the interest of mother church concerned." <sup>21</sup> The most interesting of these newspaper attacks was a pretended address of the Catholics of Boston to the newly

<sup>18</sup> Copied in the *Boston Gazette* of Feb. 18, 1771; see also Hutchinson, *History*, III, 241.

<sup>19</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 239.

<sup>20</sup> Hutchinson to Hardwicke, Oct. 30, 1778; see also Hutchinson, *History*, III, where he recalls the opposition to himself of the Congregational ministers of Boston.

<sup>21</sup> *Massachusetts Spy*, June 6, 1771; cf. *ibid.*, June 10; *Boston Gazette*, July 15.

commissioned Chief Executive. It was pretended that Catholics had had a full meeting at their "secret chamber near the town House," and with hearts replete with joy begged leave to congratulate the Governor.

Tho we are the last in our gratulations, we may with much probability be said to be the very first — with the least spark of sincerity. — The same worthies who have been the instruments of your exaltations, have been the firmest advocates for our brethren in Great Britain, and we hope by the favorable recommendations of your Excy. they will give us such encouragement, as that we also may lift up our heads with joy in this land, which was formerly inhabited by heathen, and now by a still more detestable race of heretics; whom yet we have the most pleasing prospect ere long of chastising, after the manner of our predecessors, in the days of Queen Mary the First of glorious memory.

We promise ourselves your particular protection, and are solicitous as soon as possible to be favored, as our brethren of Nova Scotia are, with a father confessor of the Jesuitical order, to receive a stipend from home. We entreat you . . . would exert your influence that a law may be made, whereby it shall be death with extreme torture for any person to presume to exhibit the effigies of our holy Father the Pope.<sup>22</sup>

This first-rate piece of chicanery, calumnious innuendo, and bigoted satire illustrates the extremes to which the Liberty Party in Boston were proceeding.

A noticeable break in this type of propaganda during the summer months of 1771 corresponds to the "respite from all publick controversy" at this time, marked by Hutchinson himself in the third volume of his history.<sup>23</sup>

When the political issue was renewed in the fall, it was Sam Adams again, who, writing in the *Boston Gazette* under the pen name "Cotton Mather," introduced the anti-Popery note. His attack had to do with Governor Hutchinson's receiving a

<sup>22</sup> *Boston Gazette*, July 29, 1771; see also the "Dick Vorrish" letters in the *Gazette*, Nov. 19, 1770, and March 18, 1771.

<sup>23</sup> *History*, III, 248.

royal grant in lieu of depending on the Massachusetts Legislature for his salary.

I beg leave [Adams wrote] to make a supposition. If his Holiness the Pope, for the sake of once more having a Catholic King seated on the British throne, should make him a present yearly of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, for the support of himself and his household, it would be a great saving indeed to the nation; but would the people consent to it because of that saving?<sup>24</sup>

"A Real Friend" wrote to the Public (in the *Massachusetts Spy* of January 30, 1772):

Whoever views the conduct of the present administration cannot but see a manifest design to alter the constitution both in church and state. The detestable religion, or rather superstition of the church of Rome is encouraged in opposition to plain Acts of Parliament (Papists tolerated, a Romish bishop [*sic*] paid for in Nova Scotia, Catholics admitted to the Council in Grenada).

This, my friends, is a bold stroke, and unless it be opposed, you will very soon be obligated to go to mass yourselves. Your Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Secretary, it is said, have, in a manner, forsaken the way of worship which they were (before pensioned) very tenacious of, and gone over to the Church of England; one step more may carry them to Rome, and this step may be facilitated by the arrival of a Bishop.

The attempt to introduce a Bishop into America may be a part of the same plan; it is likely he will be a Romish Bishop under the guise of an Episcopalian. Think on these things, my countrymen, and keep a good lookout. . . .

On February 13, 1772, *The Spy* brought to the popular attention that there was a Catholic priest and a Catholic congregation in Philadelphia, who were "truly sensible and grateful to the honourable family of the Penns, for many privileges, religious and civil," and were hoping for a continuance of the same under their new governor.<sup>25</sup> And on February 17th, the *Boston*

<sup>24</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Nov. 25, 1771.

<sup>25</sup> *Massachusetts Spy*, Feb. 13, 1772.



*Evening Post* carried the statement that it made little or no difference whether "popery and tyranny" were established by "an avowed Papist or a pretended Protestant."

On March 26th the *Massachusetts Spy* carried the copy of documents relating to the full toleration of Catholics in Grenada. Among the reasons given by the Council of that Colony on December 4, 1771, for disobeying the new Governor's orders was included a denial of the King's prerogative to dispense with

the many acts of Parliament which restrain the Crown from employing in places of trust and power all persons whatever who profess the Roman Catholic Religion. . . . The same power that can constitute two Roman Catholic Counsellors and three Members of the Assembly and one Judge, may, whenever he pleases, make every Member of the Council and Assembly and all the Judges of Roman Catholics, the legality of one case being just as plain as the other.

The author of this provocative article denied that he was actuated by any partial, national, selfish, or illiberal prejudices. He desired, he said, "in the spirit of true liberty," to have even these new French-born subjects enjoy "the blessings of our free constitution and happy form of government" legally: that is, by becoming Protestants.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, in the midst of this hot anti-Catholic campaign, the Penobscot Indians, who had received no answer to the petition for a priest which they had presented to Governor Bernard nearly three years before, were planning to visit the new Governor on the same errand. Certain events of the early part of 1772 determined them to make their visit then. They had received an invitation to send some of their children to Dartmouth College, in New Hampshire, recently opened under the auspices of the Rev. Eleazar Wheelock. Governor Wentworth, of New Hampshire, who initiated this particular advance to them, was assured by those agents to whom he entrusted the

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1772.

matter that the Indians could probably be induced to accept the offer. Hitherto, however, they had not been prevailed on to do so.<sup>27</sup> While they were still considering the invitation, they had a visit from Father Bailly, and were advised by him to go to Boston and obtain permission for him to officiate among them.<sup>28</sup>

The Penobscot delegation went to Boston and were received by the Governor and Council on June 13th.<sup>29</sup> Toma, their speaker, desired the Governor "to appoint a Person to tary with us. The Jesuit [the missionary] at Canada has told us he is willing to officiate for us, if he was desired by the Governor to do it." The Governor then, by advice of Council, made the following answer: "Every person is allowed liberty of conscience, but it is not in the Governor's power to allow Romish Priests or Jesuits to reside in the Province, there being a Law against it, which he cannot dispense with."<sup>30</sup>

The Penobscots, despite this denial of their request, remained firm in their attachment to the Catholic religion, and again refused Mr. Wheelock's offer when it was renewed the following May. The agent whom Mr. Wheelock sent to them at that time, when reporting this, also mentioned certain "Jealousies" which the Indians cherished against English missionaries like himself who were sent among them: he thought that there was little need of any other new ones then.<sup>31</sup>

His statement had reference to the fact that, in early July, 1772, the Legislature had appropriated eighty pounds a year for three years "for supporting one Missionary of sober life and conversation for promoting Christian knowledge in the Eastern parts."<sup>32</sup>

In late October, 1772, the Revolution for Civil Rights and Religious Liberties against Tyranny and Popery came very

<sup>27</sup> Wentworth to Wheelock, Jan. 25, and June 24, 1772.

<sup>28</sup> William A. Bartlet, *The Frontier Missionary* (Boston, 1853), 100; *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 392; cf. Dec. 13, 1780. <sup>29</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 16:638.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>31</sup> *Wheelock Narrative, Rochester Reprints*, VII, 10.

<sup>32</sup> In passing this appropriation the General Court had acted on the petition of the Associated Ministers of York County, Maine, *Mass. Court Records*, 29:232, 304, 353; cf. also Rev. Daniel Little to Samuel Phillips, Feb. 18, 1788 (in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Miscel. Papers, 1787-1788*).

close to Boston. The town meeting suddenly enlarged its advertised order of business and appointed a committee to state the rights of the colonists "as men, *as Christians* and as subjects: in opposition to the infringements thereof that have been or may be made thereon."

One of these infringements was "an act talked of for establishing an American episcopate," which gave occasion to a declaration of the town that, in their opinion, "no power on earth can justly give either temporal or *spiritual* jurisdiction within this province, except the great and general court."

In its memorable Declaration of Rights, "the Colonists as Men" were declared to possess certain "natural rights," amongst which are "first a right to Life, secondly to Liberty; thirdly to Property," and that "All men have a Right . . . in case of intolerant Oppression, Civil or Religious, to leave the Society they belong to, and enter into another." These were old-time formulas; one of their clearest exponents had been the Jesuit Cardinal (now Saint) Robert Bellarmine.

The Boston Declaration further stated that:

As neither reason requires nor religion permits the contrary, every Man . . . has a right peaceably and quietly to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. In regard to Religion, mutual tolleration in the different professions thereof is what all good and candid minds in all ages have ever practised; and both by precept and example inculcated on mankind . . .

. . . The Roman Catholicks or Papists are excluded by reason of such Doctrines as these, that Princes excommunicated may be deposed, and those they call *Hereticks* may be destroyed without mercy; besides their recognizing the Pope in so absolute a manner, in subversion of Government, by introducing as far as possible into the states, under whose protection they enjoy life, liberty and property, that solecism in politicks, *Imperium in imperio* leading directly to the worst anarchy and confusion, civil discord, war and bloodshed.

The materials for this famous statement had been prepared in England, by Benjamin Franklin, "whose counsels [the Boston

Whigs] obeyed and in whose wisdom and dexterity they had an implicit faith." <sup>33</sup>

The Boston document touched off the whole anti-Tory, anti-Anglican, anti-Catholic sentiment of New England. Within a short time a third part of the towns had passed resolves of the same nature and tendency.<sup>34</sup> The clergy also were asked to engage "in our cause."<sup>35</sup> Some clerical hand seems to have been busy in an absurd canard that appeared in the *Boston Evening Post*, November 23, 1772. This pretended to describe a papal ceremony in St. Peter's, when divine vengeance sent a stroke of lightning, and in the end the people, the Pope, and the Cardinals were all converted to Protestantism.

It is impossible to separate from this same campaign an advertisement sent out on December 10, 1772, by the publisher of the *Newport Mercury*, and the book it advertised. This book was a reprint of a fiendish account of "the wicked and abominable practises" of the Romish priest. The original was written by an ex-priest named Antonio Gavin.<sup>36</sup>

The town of Gloucester, in its vote on December 28, 1772, to side with Boston, referred to "comminations with respect to our religious liberties, introductive to prelacy and popery." The town of Marlboro protested "the presence of a Romish priest in Nova Scotia and the appointment of papists to positions of trust in the British Empire" as unconstitutional measures, fraught with great danger.<sup>37</sup> Rev. Charles Turner, in the Election Sermon of May 26, 1773, besides referring to the wounded and perilous condition of civil affairs, mentioned the danger to the religious privileges of the country, as shown by the facts that the laws of England against Popery were dormant, that there was a Roman Catholic bishop in Canada, and a Popish priest in Nova Scotia.

Reference to the Canadian religious situation was also made in the Dudleian Lecture, delivered on September 1, 1773, by

<sup>33</sup> Hutchinson, *History*, III, 261.      <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>35</sup> James T. Austin, *Life of Elbridge Gerry* (2 vols.: Boston, 1829), I, 18, 19.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>37</sup> *Massachusetts Spy*, Jan. 14, 1773; *Essex Gazette*, Feb. 26, 1773; *Braintree Records* (1886), p. 439.



the Rev. Samuel Cooper. Together with the traditional mis-statements about Rome's awful and unreasonable tenets, the lecturer declared:

We have a Romish Bishop and a Popish colony, not far from us, where, I am well informed, instead of the advancement of Protestant truth, since its subjection to the British government, numbers have been perverted from our own profession. And if Popery deceitfully assuming a milder form seems to be less dreaded and abhorred than it once was, let us be upon our guard, and remembering it is Popery still, be prepared to oppose it in every form. At best it is the extremist despotism.

Popery is incompatible with the safety of a free government. It sets up a sovereign head, superior to all civil rulers; a spiritual power that reaches to everything upon earth and can brook no control. Trampling upon the rights of conscience, and assuming an authority to absolve every sacred obligation, what pledge can it possibly leave us, for the security of civil freedom. . . . Let us therefore . . . allow . . . no trace of the papal bondage to be found among us. . . .<sup>38</sup>

On March 11, 1774, John Adams, Thomas Russell, and others were present at a dinner in Charlestown, at which the conversation turned on political rights. Adams' impressions of this conversation, or his own attitude to the subject discussed, reveal the identity or the parallelism in Whig minds of Papists and Tories, and illustrate at the same time their own singular application of the ideas of private judgment and toleration.

The right of private judgment [Adams declared in his *Diary*] and the liberty of conscience were claimed by the papists, and allowed them in the reign of James II, but have been prohibited by law ever since. . . . The advocates for the administration now in America claim the right of private judgment to overthrow the constitution of this Province, the privileges of all America and British liberties into the bargain. *Sed Non allocatur.*<sup>39</sup>

An identical viewpoint is manifested in an article, which appeared shortly afterwards, in the *Boston Evening Post*. It was

<sup>38</sup> S. Cooper, *The Man of Sin* (Boston, 1774), p. 66.

<sup>39</sup> John Adams, *Diary*, March 11, 12, 1774 (*Works*, II, 335).

headed, *Veritas versus Catholic*. Taking as its premise that Catholics plead conscience in support of certain of their tenets which are

subversive of the first principles of civil society [the article continued], Suppose a sect of Roman Catholics should rise up in this province, fired with all the zeal and bigotry, which that religion is wont to inspire . . . would it be the duty of our legislative power to remain calm spectators? <sup>40</sup>

Events moved swiftly to the crisis. The Tea agitation and its famous climax broke in December, 1773; the British Government prepared and passed the Boston Port Bill, replaced Hutchinson with a military ruler, and put through three fundamental changes in the Province charter. The Patriot Party on their side sent delegates to a Continental Congress and took over the ruling power themselves.

While the Massachusetts delegates were on their way to the Continental Congress, news reached America of another measure passed by Parliament and immediately interpreted as anti-American. This was the famous Quebec Act. By its provisions the practice and support of the Catholic religion in Canada were legalized, and Catholics there were exempted from the Test Oath, and thus accorded opportunity to share in the civil and military life of the country. At the same time the ancient French property and civil laws were restored and the boundaries of the Province reëstablished as in the days before the conquest.

Even before the actual text of the Quebec Bill had arrived in America (it was first printed in New York on the 28th of August, and in Boston on the 29th, by the *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*), the Boston papers had printed the most important English criticisms of it. The first of these was the petition made against the bill by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London. It was this petition that

<sup>40</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, April 18, 1774; cf. Rev. Peter Whitney in a sermon preached July 14, 1774, *The Transgression of a Land*, etc. (Boston, 1774), pp. 62 ff.: "The principles and tenets of Papists being such that it is not safe for any Protestant government to tolerate them."

gave the tone to most of the later adverse criticism of the Act. Among other things, it declared the Act

to be entirely subversive of the great fundamental principles of the British monarchy, [and] contrary to the compact entered into with the numerous settlers of the reformed religion. [It asserted] that the Roman Catholic religion which is known to be idolatrous and bloody is established by this bill, and no legal provision is made for the free exercise of our reformed faith, nor the security of our Protestant fellow subjects of the Church of England in the true worship of Almighty God according to their consciences.

Furthermore it made the point

that your Majesty's illustrious family was called to the throne of this kingdom in consequence of the exclusion of the Roman Catholic ancient branch of the Stuart line, under the express stipulation that they should profess the Protestant Religion, and according to the oath established (in the first year of William III) your Majesty at your Coronation swore that you would . . . maintain . . . the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law. . . .<sup>41</sup>

The other outstanding criticism, printed the same day by the *Boston Gazette*, was contained in an extract of a letter from a "Gentleman of Distinction." This asserted that the Quebec Bill was, among other things:

a well-concerted scheme to give a check to the rest of our colonies. A difference in religion, laws and dependency will keep up a strong animosity; and there is no doubt but every encouragement that can possibly be afforded these licensed slaves, these children of Popery, supported by a Protestant Court will be given, in order to subdue these headstrong colonists who pretend to be governed by English laws.<sup>42</sup>

It also charged that the British Ministry had acted at the instigation of France and was bent on destroying the British

<sup>41</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*, *Boston Evening Post*, Aug. 22; *Essex Gazette*, Aug. 30.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Newport Mercury*, Aug. 29.

constitution so as to lay a sure foundation on which "to build and establish Popery."

No hint was even expressed of the tardy justice and humanity manifested by the Act to the eighty thousand French Catholics, who at their defeat in 1760 had made a national pact with the British Government and who had been solemnly assured by the peace treaty of 1763 that this pact would be faithfully observed.

For five years the Massachusetts Dissenters had so continuously protested on constitutional grounds against the British Ministry's toleration of a Catholic bishop in Quebec and its employment of a Catholic missionary in Nova Scotia that the Quebec Act served only to verify their worst suspicions and to justify a new Protestant Revolution.

This was the decision arrived at in the quasi-General Court that opened in Milton on September 5th. This assembly, already planned before the Massachusetts delegates started for the Continental Congress, had the purpose of influencing Congress by a presentation of grievances. Among these, drawn up in the form of Resolves by a committee which reported on the 9th, was one against the Quebec Act. It called the Act

dangerous in an extreme degree to the Protestant religion and to the civil rights and liberties of all Americans; and therefore, as men and Protestant Christians, we are indispensably obliged to take all proper measures for our security.<sup>43</sup>

This resolve was reported, debated, and adopted at Dedham on Sept. 9, 1774. The resolves were hastened to Philadelphia by Paul Revere, riding express, who arrived there with them on September 16th. The very next day Congress adopted them and resolved to proclaim to the country its hearty approbation of them.<sup>44</sup>

Massachusetts newspapers continuously opened their columns to the flood of anti-Catholic propaganda from England which poured into this country in September. They presented a picture of the London Protestant mob saluting the King with groans and hisses and crying out, "No Popery, No French laws,

<sup>43</sup> *Journals of the Continental Congress* (Washington, 1904), I, 34-35.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 40.



No protestant popish king.”<sup>45</sup> They copied the prejudiced assertion that the Quebec Bill “contradicts the principles of the British Constitution by establishing Popery and Tyranny.” They printed the accusation that “the friends of the Stuarts now hold the reins and are preparing another Restoration.”<sup>46</sup> There was likewise the reflection that when the British conquered Quebec in 1760, “little was it imagined that they were sacrificing their own liberties to set up the religion of their enemies.”

From London, too, came sarcastic gibes about the Pope’s pleasure at the Act, and about his expressions of gratitude for it to the King, the Anglican bishops, and the British Ministry; and pseudo-prophecies that Popery would become the national religion of America, and then of England.<sup>47</sup> English in origin also was the more than satirical assertion that “the Pope had been solicited to publish a crusade against the rebellious Bostonians, in order to excite the Canadians . . . to extirpate those bitter enemies to the Romish religion.” The same foreign source furnished the typical accusation that the Ministry had hired “several Jesuits and rank Jacobites to write in defence of the Popish Quebec bill,” together with cutting reflections on “the sophistry” and “specious panegyric” of these “advocates for Popery and arbitrary power.”<sup>48</sup> From London correspondents, too, came the items that the Catholics of Ireland would migrate to Canada, and that the Catholics of England would soon have the same privileges as those of Quebec.<sup>49</sup> All this and more in September. And there were besides the repetition of English complaints that the Protestants of Canada “are flying away to our adjacent colonies from persecution and perhaps torture.”<sup>50</sup> From London, too, came the famous Vision, printed in the *Royal American Magazine* (Boston, Oct., 1774). Its pur-

<sup>45</sup> London, June 23, in *Boston Evening Post*, Sept. 5.

<sup>46</sup> London, June 15, *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 8; cf. also London, July 15, *Boston Evening Post*, Sept. 12.

<sup>47</sup> London, July 2, *Essex Gazette*, Sept. 13.

<sup>48</sup> London, July 5, *Essex Gazette*, Sept. 13.

<sup>49</sup> *Massachusetts Spy*, Sept. 5; *News-Letter*, Sept. 22.

<sup>50</sup> *Boston Evening Post*, Oct. 17, 31.

pose was to show the approbation and countenance of the Roman religion by Lord Bute, Lord North, and the Anglican bishops, under the auspices of the King, and to prophesy the return of the martyrdoms of Smithfield.

New England sentiment itself seems to have been most fearful of the actual military danger from Canada. News that one hundred thousand Canadians and five thousand Indians, "in case of civil war would infallibly be let loose on our back settlements to scalp, ravage and lay everything waste with fire and sword," taken from the *New York Gazette* of September 19th, was reprinted in the *Boston News-Letter* of October 6th. Four days later, John Pitts wrote to Samuel Adams in Philadelphia: <sup>51</sup>

Great uneasiness prevails from the report of Gov. Carlton being ordered to discipline 30 thousand men immediately, which there is great reason to fear is to promote the plan of subjugating this Province & eventually the whole Continent.

Awful rumors were circulating in Boston that the Governor of Quebec would strike upon our frontiers with "blacks and whites." <sup>52</sup> Others than Josiah Quincy, Sr., might pray "God forbid" that after Americans had "spent so much blood and treasure in aiding Britain to conquer Canada, Britains and Canadians in conjunction may now subjugate us." <sup>53</sup>

Not all of Boston or New England was opposed to the Quebec Act and its Catholic content. The Tory element was on the whole rather in favor of the Act. At first, it was silent and embarrassed at the epochal fact of this legalization of the Catholic religion in the British Empire without an accompanying explicit provision for the Anglican establishment.<sup>54</sup>

However, it began to make itself heard shortly after the middle of September, fortified apparently in its general loyalty to the Government by the news from London.

<sup>51</sup> Cited in J. H. Smith, *Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony* (2 vols.: New York, 1907), II, 85.

<sup>52</sup> Turner to Chase, Oct. 23, 1774, J. Lord, *History of Dartmouth College* (2 vols.: Cambridge, 1891-1903), I, 338.

<sup>53</sup> Oct. 26, 1774, *Proc., Mass. Hist. Soc., 1916-1917*, p. 481.

<sup>54</sup> Abigail Adams to John Adams, Sept. 2, 1774, in *Letters* (ed., 1811), p. 17.

On September 19, 1774, the *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy* printed a London dispatch, dated July 16th, which read in part, "The outcry of a Popish King and Parliament, spread and kept up nowadays by those who are professing Protestants, is similar to the phantom of the [Established] Church being in danger in the disgraceful part of Queen Anne's reign." By September 26th, the Boston Tories, having regained their confidence, added their own voice, and openly sided with Parliament's action.<sup>55</sup>

Opposition to the Quebec Act was the last of those ideas and principles of the people of Boston which led up to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. There can then be no doubt that New England entered the Revolution with an essential purpose to keep itself free from Prelacy and Popery. It had long justified its attitude towards the latter, both on the grounds of its charter and of the political philosophy of Milton and Locke. There had been a moment, perhaps, when it was not unwilling to accept a temporary Catholicity in captured Canada, with proper restrictions, and in the hope of gradually introducing a dominant Protestantism. However, that moment was only short-lived, if ever really sincere, and gave way to the generally bitter and complete antagonism to any policy of Catholic toleration, anywhere in the Empire.

Given these facts, and comparing them with the new Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, made before the end of the Revolutionary War, one must draw the conclusion that, as regards religion, Massachusetts lost that war. In the end, it yielded its former claims to exclude Catholics from freedom of worship and to prevent priests from exercising their official duties in its territory. Even before these solemn and fundamental concessions, it had welcomed aid from Catholic France against England; before that even, it had given oral permission to its Catholic Indians to have a priest. And even before that, it had extended an invitation to Catholic Quebec to join its federation, while retaining its Catholic status. On that mo-

<sup>55</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*, Sept. 26, Oct. 9, 1774. For an exhaustive study, cf. C. H. Metzger, *The Quebec Act* (New York, 1936).

mentous occasion it had emphasized the right which the Catholic Canadians had by nature to their own freedom of worship.

All these changes were the result of necessity. But these changes were not so far-reaching, when effected, as they had been considered in the struggle against their ever taking place. The fundamentals of Puritan doctrine against the divine right of kings were in reality Catholic doctrine. The freedom of conscience was a Catholic doctrine. The system of Milton and Locke had only to be pushed to its logical conclusion to do away with its only exception, and become the system of Cardinal Bellarmine and Lord Baltimore.



## CHAPTER XII

### TOLERATION OF CATHOLICITY DURING THE FIRST YEARS OF THE REVOLUTION (1774-1777)

ALTHOUGH MASSACHUSETTS began the revolt from British authority in a high pitch of anti-Catholic sentiment, nevertheless, before the end of the war, it had legalized the practice of Catholicity within its own borders. It arrived at this revolution inside the Revolution more by its own necessity than by sincere conviction. Indispensable contacts with the other Colonies forced on it a less narrow and less intolerant viewpoint, and hope of aid from Canada brought an acknowledgment of the Canadians' inherent right to religious freedom. A similar hope dictated connivance at the exercise of priestly functions among its Catholic Indians. Finally, a whole combination of circumstances, brought about by its union with the other Colonies and including in their wake the alliance with Catholic France, swept it into the constitutional promulgation of religious freedom for all its Catholic residents.

#### I

The first step toward toleration of Catholicity by Massachusetts was taken when New England's fear of the Canadians was partly replaced by hope of Canada's friendship. Good tactics consequently dictated a change of front regarding the Catholic religion, and they were put into operation from the very moment when Americans began to bid for the amity of the northern Province.

A definite change in the Massachusetts Patriots' attitude to the Quebec Act is noted on the return of their delegates from the Continental Congress, November 9, 1774, and the publication in Boston papers of Congress' famous *Address to the Inhabitants of Quebec*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*, Nov. 10.

In this official document, prepared in part by a Massachusetts delegate, Bostonians learned, with undoubted amazement, of an attitude to the Quebec Act wholly at variance with their own former opposition to it. For in what touched the Catholic religion in Canada, the *Address* dared to criticize Parliament, not for having gone too far, but rather for not having gone far enough. It charged that Parliament had tyrannically assumed to grant *as a privilege* what the Canadians already possessed *as a right*, founded both on natural law and on their own national pact of 1760. That was a perfectly justified accusation; but nonetheless, it was a complete reversal of attitude on the part of Americans and must have caused a distinct shock to Bostonians. In the matter of civil rights the *Address* of Congress criticized Parliament's failure to allow the Canadians a popular assembly. Thus, it equivalently assented to the setting-up of a Catholic state on its own borders. In addition, Bostonians learned from the *Address* that Congress was far from apprehending any danger to American liberties from these Catholic Canadians. It preferred to regard the Canadians as fellow subjects, who, although different in religion, harbored no anti-American prejudice, but were on the contrary distinguished by liberality of sentiment. In fact, the representatives of these "free Protestant Colonies" actually invited the Canadians to form a free Catholic Colony and enter into a hearty amity. As a precedent they cited the example of the Swiss Cantons, whose "union is composed of Roman Catholic and Protestant States, living in the utmost concord and peace with one another, and thereby enabled . . . to defy and defeat every tyrant that has invaded them."

The Massachusetts delegates to Congress had been urged to aid the spread of this *Address* among the Canadians. They actually aided in spreading its spirit also among the Bostonians, for they were genuinely in sympathy with its purpose. When they went first to Philadelphia, they had carried with them a profound opposition to Catholicity. The three supports of their "righteous claims," the Natural Law, the Massachusetts Charter, and the British Constitution, all excluded toleration of

Catholicity, the last two explicitly, and the first according to Locke's interpretation, which the New Englanders followed; and their own opposition to the Quebec Act was largely anti-Catholic. But what they experienced in Philadelphia gave them to think.

The Massachusetts delegates recognized from the start that there was in Congress a great "diversity of religions, educations, manners and interests, such as it would seem almost impossible to unite in one plan of conduct." They felt themselves, therefore, obliged "to act with great delicacy and caution . . . to feel pulses and sound the depths."<sup>2</sup> Nowhere did this policy of theirs manifest itself more plainly than in the field of religion.

From the beginning they held out the hand to Episcopalians, and Mr. Reed, of Philadelphia, told the Massachusetts delegates that "they never were guilty of a more masterly stroke of policy."<sup>3</sup> The incident was immediately employed in Boston with similar intent. On September 24th, Joseph Warren wrote a letter to the Boston papers detailing the affair.<sup>4</sup> To this he added his own application, requesting Bostonians

to avoid everything which our Enemies may make use of to prejudice our Episcopal brethren against us, by representing us as disposed to disturb them in the free Exercise of their religious Privileges, to which we know they have the most undoubted claim, and which from a real Regard to the Honor and Interest of my Country and the Rights of Mankind, I hope they will enjoy unmolested as long as the name of America is known in the world.<sup>5</sup>

Doubtless the Massachusetts delegates' contact at Philadelphia with Catholic Patriots also had a marked effect on their conduct and their mental outlook. In the very first fortnight of their sojourn at Congress, they had been introduced to Charles

<sup>2</sup> John Adams to W. Tudor, Sept. 26, 1774, *Works*, IX, 346.

<sup>3</sup> John Adams, *Works*, II, 368, note, and 377.

<sup>4</sup> As described by his friend, Samuel Adams, in a letter to him dated Sept. 9, at Philadelphia.

<sup>5</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*, Sept. 26; *Massachusetts Gazette and News-Letter*, Sept. 29.

Carroll of Carrollton, and heard of his devoted attachment to the colonial cause. At that time John Adams described him as "a very sensible gentleman, a Roman Catholic, and of the first fortune in America. His income is ten thousand pounds sterling a year, will be fourteen in two or three years, they say; besides, his father has a vast estate, which will be his after his father."<sup>6</sup> Before the end of September, John Adams had also met the Irish Catholic, Stephen Moylan, a prominent Philadelphia merchant, who ranked among the highest in the city's society. Adams met him at "a most splendid feast" in the house of R. Penn, and in the company of Dickinson and General Lee, the only others of the group whom he mentioned by name. Perhaps Moylan's Catholicity attracted his attention. Moylan's brother, Francis, was consecrated Catholic Bishop of Kerry in Ireland that same year.<sup>7</sup>

John Adams also enlarged his contact with Catholicity by attending a Catholic Sunday afternoon service in Philadelphia.

Led by curiosity and good company [he] strolled away [as he put it in a letter to his wife] to mother church or rather grandmother church; I mean the Roman chapel. I heard a good short moral essay upon the duty of parents to their children, founded in justice and charity, to take care of their interests, temporal and spiritual. This afternoon's entertainment was to me most awful and affecting; the poor wretches fingering their beads, chanting Latin, not a word of which they understood; their Pater Nosters and Ave Marias; their holy water; their crossing themselves perpetually; their bowing to the name of Jesus whenever they heard it; their bowing and kneeling and genuflecting before the altar. The dress of the priest was rich white lace. The pulpit was velvet and gold. The altar piece was very rich, little images and crucifixes about, wax candles lighted up. But how shall I describe the picture of our Saviour, in a frame of marble over the altar, at full length upon the cross in the agonies and the blood dripping and streaming from his wounds! The music, consisting of an

<sup>6</sup> John Adams, *Diary*, Sept. 11, 1774 (*Works*, II, 380).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1774 (*Works*, II, 386), in Griffin, *Catholicism and the American Revolution* (3 vols.: Philadelphia, 1909-1911), II, 227, 232.



organ and a choir of singers, went all the afternoon except sermon time, and the assembly chanted most sweetly and exquisitely. Here is everything which can lay hold of the eye, ear and imagination — everything which can charm the simple and ignorant. I wonder how Luther ever broke the spell.<sup>8</sup>

Whatever else he got from this experience, John Adams learned that the Province of Pennsylvania, exactly the same in population as Massachusetts and Virginia, and much greater than New York, allowed complete religious tolerance, even to Catholics. There was another occasion when this fact was brought to his attention quite bluntly. On October 14th the Massachusetts delegates were invited to address a Quaker audience. At the meeting one of the Quakers, a certain Mr. Pemberton, said that

Congress were here endeavoring to form a union of the Colonies; but there were difficulties in the way, and none of more importance than liberty of conscience. The laws of New England and particularly of Massachusetts were inconsistent with it, for they not only compelled men to pay to the building of churches and support of ministers, but to go to some known religious assemblies on *first* days, etc; and that he and his friends were desirous of engaging [the Massachusetts delegates] to assure them that [their] State would repeal all these laws, and *place things as they were in Pennsylvania*.

A suspicion immediately arose in my mind [wrote Adams in his *Diary*] . . . that this artful Jesuit, for I had been before apprized of his character, was endeavoring . . . to break up the Congress. I arose and spoke in answer to him. The substance of what I said was that we had no authority to bind our constituents to any such proposals: that the laws of Massachusetts were the most mild and equitable establishment of religion that was known in the world, if indeed they could be called an establishment; that it would be in vain for us to enter into any conferences on such a subject . . . the very liberty of conscience, which [the Quaker] invoked, would demand indulgence for the tender consciences of the people of Massachusetts and allow them to preserve their laws: that it might be depended on, this was a point that could not be carried.

<sup>8</sup> *Familiar Letters* (New York, 1876), p. 45, Oct. 9, 1774.

To which Pemberton made no reply but this: "Oh! sir, pray don't urge liberty of conscience in favor of such laws!" Adams noted in his *Diary* that "it might have been better perhaps to have postponed" his own declaration of the Massachusetts attitude to another time: but he voiced no objection to Pennsylvania's large toleration in Pennsylvania.<sup>9</sup> Eager for Pennsylvania's help, he left its religious policy to its own conscience.

Similar motives were evident in Congress' *Address* to the Catholic Canadians. The thought of obtaining Canadian aid in the existing crisis had hardly entered the New England mind at first: nor is there any sure evidence as to the moment when such a notion was first conceived by any member of the Congress. However, there are indications which point toward its existence in late September. On the 29th of that month the New York *Gazette* printed an item, dated New York, September 25th, which declared "the French of Canada were opposed to the Quebec Bill as much as any [other] of His Majesty's subjects."<sup>10</sup>

Such news could well have occasioned an official American attempt to gain the Canadians' friendship. Indeed, a manoeuvre in that direction was actually discussed in Philadelphia in early October. On the 4th of that month, General Charles Lee visited John Adams and showed him an address from Congress to the people of Canada which he had in his possession. Adams, who mentioned the incident in his *Diary*, made no comment on it. However, in view of what happened later, it could hardly have gone altogether unnoticed. Indeed, it may have been connected with a motion made two and a half weeks later, in the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, "to take into consideration the propriety of appointing an agent or agents to repair to Canada . . . to consult with the inhabitants thereof and settle a friendly correspondence and agreement with them." Given the time necessary for a letter from Philadelphia to arrive in Boston, the date when this motion was made is probably not

<sup>9</sup> *Works*, II, 398.

<sup>10</sup> The same news from the same sources appeared in the *Massachusetts Gazette and News-Letter* of Oct. 6th; and in the *New Hampshire Gazette* of Oct. 14th.

without significance. The motion itself was taken up by the Provincial Congress on the next day, with the result that the matter was referred to the next meeting of that body.<sup>11</sup>

In Philadelphia, however, the Grand Congress voted on October 21st to appoint a committee to prepare an address to the Canadians. On the same day it named the conservative Mr. Cushing, one of the delegates from Massachusetts, a member of that committee.

By the time that Congress finished with the draft of the *Address to the Inhabitants of Quebec*, this document combined not only the idea of toleration based on the stipulation of the Treaty of Paris, but that of *liberty of conscience founded on divine law* as well as on treaty. The *Address* was passed in Congress on the last day of the session.

It constituted a most complete reversal of the sentiments, officially expressed by Congress in its *Address to the People of Great Britain*, passed on the 21st. In this, Catholicity had been described as "a religion that has deluged [England] with blood, and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder and rebellion through every part of the world." Furthermore, in the same document Parliament was criticized for setting up in Canada a new system so peculiarly capable "to reduce the ancient free Protestant colonies to slavery."

So the Massachusetts delegates returned from Philadelphia to Boston with a wider political viewpoint, part of which was represented by Congress' friendly approach to the Catholic Canadians.

In the very first number of the *Boston Gazette* issued after their return, a notice appeared to the effect that

there is certain intelligence from Canada by a vessel arrived in Salem on Friday last, that the Canadians, French as well as British, are much dissatisfied with . . . the Quebec Bill, thinking it too great a sacrifice, when entitled to a Toleration by a Treaty on Conquest. It is asserted that Town Meetings are held . . . from Montreal to Quebec, and reported that they have chosen Delegates for the Continental Congress in May

<sup>11</sup> *Journal*, Oct. 21, 22, 1774.

next and are preparing petitions and remonstrances for the repeal of the Quebec Bill.<sup>12</sup>

On November 17th, the *News-Letter* carried extracts from "A Letter from Montreal dated October 9th to a friend in New York":

. . . The French Noblesse and Gentry are very well pleased with the new Act . . . as they expect to lord it over the industrious Farmer and Trader. . . . These latter, though greatly dissatisfied and alarmed at this Act, dare not complain for fear of the displeasure of their Priests, who rule and govern this whole Country as they please. . . . It has been said that some Canadian regiments would be raised and sent against you; but depend on it, none will go willingly, except their officers.<sup>13</sup>

This was propaganda in favor of Congress' *Address* to the Canadians. It emphasized the difference between the Canadian people on the one hand and their seigneurs and priests on the other; and thereby hoped to dispel New England's fear of Canadian invasion. At the same time it prepared the New England mind for at least a toleration of the Catholic religion in Canada itself.

The Continental Congress had asked the delegates of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York to assist in the diffusion of the *Address* to the Canadians, and on November 16, 1774, three hundred copies of the French translation of the *Address* were sent to Boston. These were received here just before November 26th, on which date the Massachusetts Provincial Congress again took up in very real ways the matter of a friendly correspondence with Canada. It even assumed "the expense of transmitting the *Address* to the Canadians."<sup>14</sup>

The Patriot standard-bearer newspaper, the *Boston Gazette*, on December 19, 1774, gave a third account of the French-Canadians' friendship for the Colonies. "In view of this Canadian sentiment," the article in question asked, "was it good cause or good policy to jeopardize this friendly attitude by open

<sup>12</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Nov. 14, 1774.

<sup>13</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and News-Letter*, Nov. 17, 1774.

<sup>14</sup> *Journal*, Dec. 6, 8, pp. 51, 59, 74.



attacks on the religion to which these people were so attached?" In its use of this argument the propaganda organ of Samuel Adams antedated by a year George Washington's much-heralded stand against the celebration of Pope Day. On January 9th, the same Boston paper considered it worth while to print the resolve of the deputies appointed by the several counties of the Province of Maryland:

As our opposition to the settled plan of the British Administration to enslave America will be strengthened by an union of all ranks of men in this province, we do most earnestly recommend that all former differences about Religion or politics and all private animosities and quarrels of every kind, from henceforth cease and be forever buried in oblivion.<sup>15</sup>

The pulpit also added its influence to the new campaign. Rev. William Gordon, minister at Roxbury, in a Thanksgiving Day sermon spoke on tolerance of Catholicity in Canada. He also recalled his pleasure, on his first arrival in America in 1770, at seeing in Philadelphia "how Papists, Episcopalians, Moravians, Lutherans, Calvinists and Quakers lived together in peace and good temper. . . . I have no objection to the Canadians being fully secured in the enjoyment of their religion, however erroneous and anti-Christian it may appear to me as a Protestant."

In pursuing their new Canadian campaign, the Boston Patriots had to defend themselves against the attacks of the Tories. The strategy of the latter at this juncture was to recall the previous New England reasons for opposing the Quebec Act, by emphasizing the danger from Canada and playing up the concessions made on religion.

Among the Tory writers was one Daniel Leonard, who signed himself "Massachusettensis." His articles, published in *The Post-Boy*, beginning with December 12th, were "well written, abounded with wit, discovered good information, and were conducted with a subtlety of art and address wonderfully calculated to keep up the spirit of [the Tory] party, [and] to depress

<sup>15</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Jan. 9, 1775. Charles Carroll was a member of this Maryland Convention.

[that of the Patriots]." By recalling the arguments formerly used against the Quebec Act by the Puritans, especially the fear of the Canadian French and Indians, and by pointing out the perversions to which the doctrine of Natural Rights had often been subjected, he made a visible impression on the popular mind.

The very week after *Massachusettensis*' first article, some Boston Patriot sent to the paper a short rejoinder;<sup>16</sup> and followed this up on December 26th with a sarcastic request addressed to the author, saying, "As you have rare abilities, I should be much pleased to see them exercised in displaying the beauties of the Divine Right of Kings . . . *the Divinity of Popery* and the glory of the Stuart Reigns. . . ." <sup>17</sup> Finally, in late January, a series of articles began to be published in point by point refutation, under the pen name "Novanglus." Their real author was John Adams.

In this controversy Adams rebutted the charge that the principles of the natural law had been abused in their application. These principles, he asserted, "have been invariably applied against the Stuarts . . . in the support of the Reformation and the Protestant religion; and against the worst tyranny that the genius of Toryism has ever invented, I mean the Roman superstition." He failed to mention their very recent use by Congress, in favor of the French-Canadians' right to practice their Roman religion. He also omitted any reference to the part played by Catholics in the preaching and preservation of these same principles. He called them "the principles of Aristotle and Plato, of Livy and Cicero, and Sydney, Harrington and Locke." It did not suit the purposes of his argument to state what he had read in Sydney's own book, that they were also the principles of the Catholic Cardinal Bellarmine and of many Catholic theologians before him.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Massachusetts Gazette and Post-Boy*, Feb. 13, 1775, letter. <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 19.

<sup>18</sup> John Adams, *Works*, IV, 16; *Boston Gazette*, Jan. 23, 1775. See also Sydney, *Discourses on Government*, ed. by Thomas Hollis (London, 1763): "Though the schoolmen (to whom Filmer imputed these principles) were corrupt, they were neither stupid nor unlearned; they could not but see that which all men said, nor lay more approved foundations than that man is naturally free . . ." (p. 155).

While, therefore, it was admitted even on the Patriots' side, that, as Congress had proclaimed, Catholics had a right to their religion in Canada, it was also affirmed that there must be no other establishment in Massachusetts than what already existed.<sup>19</sup> The change in Boston sentiments, reflected by John Adams' newspaper articles, had to do with Canada only; its purpose was to win Canadian support.

Nor was John Adams alone among the Patriots in taking that attitude. The Boston Committee of Correspondence also took its cue from the Continental Congress and pressed the Canadian campaign. Carrying out the business handed over to it by the Provincial Congress, this group initiated a friendly correspondence with the inhabitants of Quebec. In an address to them, dated February 21, 1775, it omitted all explicit reference to religion and attempted to explain its position along exclusively political lines.<sup>20</sup> It is not without significance that even before the Boston Committee received an answer from the messenger who carried their address to Canada, assurance was received from there that "the Priests disapprove of" the plan to raise a Canadian army.<sup>21</sup> Similar reports, but of a more detailed kind, were contained in their messenger's answer.<sup>22</sup>

By springtime this Whig campaign had produced enough change in the representative Boston mind to allow its expression even in the most important sermons. President Langdon, of Harvard, for example, plainly combined old ideas with new when he preached before the Massachusetts Congress on May 31, 1775. Expressing, on the one hand, his suspicion "that all the late measures respecting the Colonies have originated from Popish schemes of men who would gladly restore the race of Stuart, and who look on Popery as a religion most favorable to arbitrary power," he nevertheless admitted that "a toleration of the Roman Catholic religion [in Canada] would be just and liberal." <sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Boston Gazette*, March 6, 1775; John Adams, *Works*, IV, 96.

<sup>20</sup> *Writings of Samuel Adams*, H. Cushing, ed. (4 vols.: New York, 1904-1908), III, 182.

<sup>21</sup> *Essex Gazette*, March 14, 1775.

<sup>22</sup> Brown to Samuel Adams, Montreal, March 29, 1775, *Mass. Arch.*, 193:41.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Langdon, "Government corrupted by Vice, etc.," in J. Thornton, *The Pulpit of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1860), pp. 227-258.

The most authoritative and explicit expression of the Boston attitude in regard to Canada is found, however, in a letter sent by the Patriots' Committee here to the Continental Congress. It still claimed that "the late regulation of civil and ecclesiastical policy of Quebec — clearly discovered [the British Ministry's] intention to make use of the Canadians as engines to reduce the continent to slavery." Nevertheless, it protested that "there never has been any intention [on the Americans' part] to give the least disturbance to our brethren of Canada to whom we most sincerely wish the full and free enjoyment of their civil and religious rights." The Bostonians wished Congress to take steps "to prevent any false impressions which our enemies may attempt to make on [the Canadians'] minds, concerning our designs, or to remove any such as have already been made . . . as we look upon it to be of the utmost importance that there should be no jealousies subsist between them and the other colonies." <sup>24</sup>

## II

Meanwhile, preparation was making for a further stage in the religious transition, the toleration of Catholicity in Massachusetts itself. The first step in this direction was taken in early May, 1775, when the Patriot authorities here equivalently offered freedom of religion to the Catholic Eastern Indians.

Every New Englander recognized the connection between Canadians and Indians. Opposition to the Quebec Act had in great measure been motivated by fear of their hostile combination.<sup>25</sup> New England's fear of such an invasion had not been wholly allayed by the Americans' friendly approach to the Canadians. New Hampshire and Maine, the two regions most exposed to invasion, and the first to express their fear of it, continued in this apprehension and took means to offset it.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 193:353; *Journal of Provincial Congress*, June 12, 1775. There is good reason to believe that this letter or a similar one was sent to Congress earlier than June 12, 1775, probably as early as May 15th.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal*.

<sup>26</sup> Lord, *History of Dartmouth College*, pp. 325, 331.



By the beginning of April, 1775, the Massachusetts Congress itself took direct steps to assure the friendship of the Six Nations and of its own Stockbridge Indians, both of whom were Protestant. In a letter to the former, dated April 4, 1775, and written by Samuel Adams, the Council made use of their religious sentiments to influence them. It referred to the Quebec Act as a "law to establish the religion of the Pope in Canada which lies so near to you. We much fear some of your children may be induced, instead of worshipping the only true God, to pay his dues to images made by their own hands." <sup>27</sup>

In early May the Massachusetts Council, which up to that time had not made any special approach to its Catholic Indians in Maine, took action in their regard also. The Patriots in the Eastern country, sensitive to every rumor of hostile activity on their border, decided on May 5th, to send a scouting party to Quebec to make discovery about a possible invasion from there. That same day they wrote to the Provincial Congress: "Perhaps it would be prudent for the Congress to . . . secure the Indians in our interest by keeping the truck trade open, supplying them powder, *or by any other method, which in their Wisdom, upon mature consideration, they may think best. A hint on this head is enough.*" <sup>28</sup>

When the Provincial Congress received this letter, it immediately (May 12th) appointed a committee "to take into consideration the expediency of taking measures for raising a company or two of Indians from among the Eastern tribes." Three days later, the Congress approved the draft of a letter to be sent to these Indians, and appointed a certain John Lane to communicate it to them and "to enlist a company of them in the service of this colony." <sup>29</sup>

In their letter to the Penobscots, the Massachusetts Council charged the British Ministry with "deep laid plots to take away *our* liberty and *your* liberty . . ." They told of the battle of Lexington, and of the united resolve of the Colonies to stand

<sup>27</sup> P. Force, 1 *Amer. Arch.*, p. 1349.

<sup>28</sup> Falmouth Committee of Safety, May 5th, *Mass. Arch.*, 193:161; *Journal, Prov. Congress*, p. 217.

<sup>29</sup> *Journal*, pp. 217, 225, 228.

together and oppose them. "*Our liberty and your liberty is the same, we are brothers, and what is for our good is for your good. And we, by standing together, shall make these wicked men afraid and overcome them and all be free men. . . . We will do all for you we can, and fight to save you any time, and hope none of your men or the Indians in Canada will join with our enemies.* You may have a great deal of good influence on them."

The letter went on to invite the Penobscots to "'list with us."<sup>30</sup> What is most significant is the letter's plain intimation that the Government of Massachusetts was prepared to allow these Catholic Indians the enjoyment of their liberty, even in religion, without unjust restriction. The letter ended: "Brothers, we humbly beseech that God who lives above and *does what is right here below* to be your friend and to bless you." The circumstances of the time and the evidence of later events make it probable that the Provincial Council also gave Captain Lane verbal instructions to acquaint the Indians more explicitly with the government's willingness to meet all their reasonable requests, including even the freedom of religion.

The Penobscots' satisfaction with the letter from Massachusetts was even greater than Captain Lane anticipated. He was surprised to find them "so hearty in our cause." Nevertheless they did not offer to enlist at once; instead they sent Orono, "one of their chiefs as an ambassador, attended by three young men, to confer with the Provincial Congress."

On June 19, 1775, two days after the battle of Bunker Hill, the four Penobscot delegates arrived at Watertown and on the next day had their official conference. As a result, the Indians agreed to side with Massachusetts, and the latter, on its part, agreed to alleviate some of the grievances of which the Indians complained. Although the official documents dealing with this meeting contain no word about religion, every circumstance indicates that this point was brought up and settled to the satisfaction of the Indians. They were permitted to have a priest.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225. Italics inserted.

<sup>31</sup> Lane to Council, June 9th, in *Baxter Mss.*, XIV, 270; Freeman to Warren, June 14th, in *ibid.*, 283; Prebble to Council, June 15th, in *Journal, Prov. Cong.*, p. 360.

No written document explicitly allowing the Indians this privilege was given them: the people of Massachusetts were not yet prepared for a public repudiation of their anti-priest law. Nevertheless, a connivance at the private exercise of priestly functions in this territory, such as Governor Bernard had proposed in vain some ten years before, was now agreed on. The Provincial Congress thereby granted to its Catholic Indians a permission which had been continually refused since the Peace of Paris and even as recently as 1772. The new Revolutionary Government thus reverted to the Indian policy which the Province had followed previous to the outbreak of the last French and Indian War. Its change of attitude in 1775 was, therefore, epoch-making. Its underlying purpose embraced not only the Penobscots but the Indians of Canada as well. In fact, the Patriot Government's letter to the Penobscots had explicitly stated the hope that these Indians might have a good influence with the other Indians to prevent their joining the British. Before the Penobscots left Watertown, the Provincial Congress made further manifestation of this hope by giving their interpreter a mission "to use his influence to cultivate a peaceable disposition in the Indians of St. Francis and the other parts adjoining."<sup>32</sup>

When, as a result of the new mission, a delegation from the St. Francis Indians came to Cambridge in mid-August to confer with the Massachusetts officials, these latter discoursed with them on the subject of their priest:

Have you a French priest in your tribe?

Yes.

Has he given you any advice with regard to the dispute?

Our priest is no warrior, and he does not concern himself about it.<sup>33</sup>

In early October came a delegation from the St. John Indians. They had visited the Penobscots on their way and, after a conference with that tribe, had composed a letter which they

<sup>32</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Aug. 16, 1775 (*Mass. Arch.*). Printed in 4 *Amer. Arch.*, 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

presented on their arrival here. In this letter, also, there was question of a priest. The St. John tribe, one branch of whom lived in Massachusetts territory, did not exactly request permission to have a priest. From what the Penobscots told them, they took that for granted. Furthermore, they actually had a priest to minister to them, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Quebec and the auspices of the British authorities in Canada and Nova Scotia. In the late summer of 1773 the famous Acadian priest, Father Mathurin Bourg, had arrived in Nova Scotia to replace Father Bailly. The new missionary, although he received no official salary, nevertheless, like his predecessor, ministered to both the Indians and the Acadians. In the course of his apostolic journeys, he had visited the St. John River in September, 1774, and he intended to do so annually thereafter.<sup>34</sup>

The St. John tribe, however, ran the risk of losing his services if they joined the Americans. Therefore, when consulting on this matter with the Massachusetts authorities, they brought up the point in their letter. This letter was presented to the Massachusetts Council on October 9, 1775, and answered by the Council on the 16th, in part as follows:

We salute you, and wish you the best of Heaven's blessings — health, peace and prosperity. We heartily receive you as our brethren in the same manner as we received your brethren of the Penobscot Tribe. We will do everything for you that we have promised to do for them. . . . We are willing you should have a Priest of your own and worship as you choose, for our great dependence and trust is in Almighty God, who made you and us. . . . October 16, 1775.<sup>35</sup>

In the meantime, the Penobscots themselves had gone off to Canada, not only to seek a priest, but also to aid the famous expedition of General Arnold against Quebec by way of the Kennebec.<sup>36</sup> While in Canada, the Penobscots presented their

<sup>34</sup> Rt. Rev. Arthur Melançon, *Vie de l'Abbé Bourg* (Rimouski, 1921), p. 77. Because of the gap in Father Bourg's register from April 30 to July 23, 1775, it is possible to think that he visited St. John River also during that period.

<sup>35</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Oct. 16, 1774.

<sup>36</sup> Washington to Continental Congress, Sept. 21, 1775; cf. Justin Smith, *Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony* (New York, 1907), I, 492 ff.



request for a priest to General Arnold, whose answer was that "they needn't be under any difficulty, for they should have a priest. We are in hopes that Quebec will be taken soon, and then there will be no difficulty." The American General could say this because he intended, if victorious, not only to allow freedom for Catholicity in Canada, but even to permit a Catholic bishop there, although not the one then in office. He purposed to give the bishopric to a certain Father de Lotbinière, a much-traveled and much-suspended Canadian priest who had taken the American side in the war. The Penobscots, therefore, also consulted this priest, whom they later referred to as "our bishop"; and they received from him almost the same answer as from General Arnold.<sup>37</sup>

However, the Penobscots were also told, evidently by the same Father de Lotbinière, that in order to be quite sure of getting the priest, they should obtain a *written* authorization from the Massachusetts Government for a priest "to sit down quietly among them." When they next visited Boston in July, 1776, they would bring up that point.<sup>38</sup>

Shortly after the Massachusetts Congress had given the Penobscots the oral permission to have a priest, General George Washington arrived in Cambridge, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the United Colonies. The dignity of the man, combined with ease and complacency of manner, helped to make his broad vision and fine spirit exercise a tremendous influence in this part of New England in matters of religion as well as of war.<sup>39</sup>

It was he who gave the instructions to General Arnold on his expedition to Canada "to protect and support the free exercise of the religion of the country and the undisturbed enjoyment of the rights of conscience in religious matters, with your utmost

<sup>37</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:530. For Father Lotbinière, see *New York Hist. Soc. Coll.* (1880), p. 220; *Am. Cath. Hist., Researches*, XXIII (1906), 97 ff.; R. P. Hugolin, *Notes Bibliographiques . . . des Recollets* (Montreal, 1932), p. 36.

As the only Canadian priest who had the Cross of the Knights of Malta, he was undoubtedly "the Romish Priest" with whom Ezra Stiles conversed at Newport, Rhode Island, on March 18 and April 1, 1769. Stiles, *Diary*, I, pp. 5-7.

<sup>38</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:530.

<sup>39</sup> Mrs. Adams to J. Adams, July 16, 1775, *Familiar Letters*.

influence and authority." It was his conviction that contempt of the religion of any country, by ridiculing any of its ceremonies or affronting its ministers, was always deeply resented.<sup>40</sup>

It was in this same spirit of prudent tolerance that in early November Washington issued an order prohibiting the celebration of Pope Day in the camp at Cambridge, November 5, 1775:

As the Commander-in-Chief had been apprised of a design for the observance of that ridiculous and childish custom of burning the effigy of the Pope, he cannot help expressing his surprise that there should be officers and soldiers in this army, so void of common sense as not to see the impropriety of such a step at this juncture; at a time when we are soliciting, and have really obtained, the friendship and alliance of the people of Canada, whom we ought to consider as brethren embarked in the same cause, the defence of the liberty of America. At this juncture, and under such circumstances, to be insulting their religion is so monstrous as not to be suffered or excused, indeed, instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to address public thanks to these our brethren, as to them we are indebted for our late happy success over the common enemy in Canada.<sup>41</sup>

The actual writing of Washington's anti-Pope Day order was probably done by a Catholic, the Stephen Moylan, of Philadelphia, whom John Adams had met at the Congress the year before. During the year 1775 he was Muster Master General of Washington's army at Cambridge, and often acted as his secretary, a position he occupied on November 5th. General Washington had another Catholic also on his staff at this time in the person of Lieutenant-Colonel John Fitzgerald, of Virginia.<sup>42</sup>

The Canada situation and the religious element involved in it again occupied General Washington's attention at the beginning of the new year. Toward the end of January, 1776, he was visited at Cambridge by delegations from the Caughnawaga Indians and the St. John tribe. The St. John delegation in-

<sup>40</sup> Sparks, *Writings of Washington*, XI, 123, 125. <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 144.

<sup>42</sup> Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 248; for Fitzgerald, cf. *ibid.*, 367.

cluded two Passamaquoddy Indians. This latter group spoke to the General about their home conditions, telling him that the British authorities were very cross with them and wanted them to fight against the New England people, but that they themselves believed that God was on the side of their "Brothers" of New England, and that the Americans would win. It is clear that the Indians were doubly embarrassed by their refusal to aid the British, for in Washington's reply to them he made mention of their religion and their lands, as if both had been put in jeopardy by their sympathy for America.<sup>43</sup> The General "advised them to pray to Jesus for aid and assistance, and to be thankful for the lands that God had given them."<sup>44</sup>

### III

While these Indians were consulting General Washington at Cambridge, John Adams was on his way to Congress. He had hardly arrived there when Congress itself again had to face the connection between religion and politics in Canada and came to a remarkable decision on the point. Adams took his seat on February 9th, and three days afterwards, as a member of the Board of War, he listened to a story of the American army's failure at Quebec. The agent, sent from Montreal by General Wooster to report it, attributed the small success of the American cause in Canada to the hostility of the clergy and the nobility there. The situation plainly dictated the necessity of sending a specially picked goodwill mission to that country. For this purpose, Congress appointed Franklin, Chase, of Maryland, and Charles Carroll, and invited Mr. Carroll's cousin, the Rev. John Carroll, to accompany them.<sup>45</sup> If John Adams had been better acquainted with the French language, he would have been named one of the Commissioners, probably instead of Chase. As it was, he presided over the committee which drafted the Commissioners' instructions and at least approved,

<sup>43</sup> *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), Nov. 2nd, 4th.

<sup>44</sup> See citations in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 107-109; see also *Mass. Arch.*, 29:502 ff.

<sup>45</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXIV (1907), 224.

if he did not compose, that part of them which read as follows:

You are further to declare that we hold sacred the rights of conscience and may promise to the whole people, solemnly in our name, the free and undisturbed exercise of their religion; and to the clergy, the full, perfect and peaceable possession and enjoyment of all their estates; that the government of everything relating to their religion and clergy shall be left entirely in the hands of the good people of that province and such legislature as they shall constitute: provided, however, that all other denominations of Christians be equally entitled to hold offices and enjoy civil privileges and the free exercise of their religion and be totally exempt from the payment of any tythes or taxes for the support of any religion.<sup>46</sup>

John Adams also made himself the apologist to New England for this very remarkable action of the Congress. In a letter to the head of the Massachusetts Provincial Council he explained that the remarkable unanimity exhibited by Congress in their decision was due in part to the fear of invasion from Canada. In the same letter he also laid himself out in praise of both the Carrolls. After speaking of the great wealth of Charles Carroll, of his liberal education in France, and his complete mastery of the French language, Adams went on:

and what is perhaps of more consequence than all the rest, he was educated in the Roman Catholic Religion and still continues to worship his Maker according to the rites of that church. In the cause of American liberty, his zeal, fortitude and perseverance have been so conspicuous that he is said to be marked out for peculiar vengeance by the friends of Administration. But he continues to hazard his all, his immense fortune, the largest in America and his life. . . . But we have done more. We have empowered the Committee to take with them, . . . Mr. John Carroll, a Roman Catholic Priest and a Jesuit, a Gentleman of learning and abilities. This gentleman will administer Baptism to the Canadians' children and bestow Absolution upon such as have been refused it by the horrified Priests in Canada, the anathemas of the Church, so terrible to the Canadians, having had a disagreeable effect upon them.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Journal of Continental Congress*, March 20, 1776.

<sup>47</sup> Warren-Adams Letters, 2 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, I, 207, Feb. 18, 1776.



Adams wrote practically the same account to his wife, but in the letter to her, he added:

Your prudence will direct you to communicate the circumstances of the priest, the Jesuit and the Romish religion only to such persons as can judge of the measure upon large and generous principles, and will not indiscreetly divulge it. The step was necessary, for the anathemas of the church are very terrible to our friends in Canada.<sup>48</sup>

When, through Adams' letter, this plan of Congress became known to some few in Boston, it was heartily approved. Mrs. Adams wrote to her husband on March 7, 1776, "all those to whom I have ventured to show that part of your letter, approve the scheme of the priest, as a master stroke of policy."<sup>49</sup>

There is some reason to believe that at the same session of Congress which approved the mission of Father Carroll, John Adams met a certain John Allan, through whom Congress later took another remarkable step involving a priest. Allan was one of a group of four Nova Scotia Patriots who had been sent to Philadelphia by some of their fellows to help bring their Colony into line with the others. This group, like Massachusetts, was seeking the help of their Catholic Indians, and was, therefore, willing to provide them with a priest. Allan, in particular, was interested in the Indians and well acquainted with their affairs. Although born in Scotland, he had lived in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, from childhood, and traded with the Indians and the Acadians of the neighborhood. He knew that both these peoples were devout Catholics, and that the Indians, by a treaty made with the British Government in 1760, enjoyed the right to practice their religion. It is even probable that he was personally acquainted with their priest, Father Bourg, for the latter had spent some weeks in the fall of 1773 at Cocagne, Allan's home town.<sup>50</sup>

Allan, who in after years also was deeply concerned with

<sup>48</sup> *Familiar Letters* (Boston, 1876), p. 135.

<sup>49</sup> *Familiar Letters* (Boston, 1876), p. 134. In the edition of 1841 see p. 92.

<sup>50</sup> A. Melançon, *Vie de l'Abbé Bourg* (Rimouski, 1921), pp. 69 ff.; Arbuthnot to Secretary of State, July 8, 1776, *Nova Scotia Arch.*

satisfying the religious desires of the Catholic Indians of Nova Scotia and Maine, probably brought up the point even in this his first visit to Congress. He was at home by June, and by that time also an Indian council had been held about the stand they would take in the war. At that council the Indians evinced a universal satisfaction with General Washington's letter, but a divided sentiment about taking sides. "We do not understand what all this quarreling is about . . . we cannot think of fighting till we know who is right and who is wrong."<sup>51</sup>

One can almost picture the conflict that went on at that Indian council, by reason of the opposing influences of Father Bourg and John Allan behind the scenes. The former's policy favored Indian neutrality, stressing their oath of allegiance and their religious rights under the existing treaty with Great Britain. The latter urged a new treaty with the United Colonies and assured them religious satisfaction in it. The decision arrived at was to send a delegation to Boston to confer with General Washington.

The delegates were to take with them the "Treaty made between their Tribes and the Government of Nova Scotia in 1760, the letter to them from General Washington, dated in February last, and the letter of the General Court of Massachusetts Bay, dated in October." And their first talk, after declaring that they were "all one as Boston and would not turn their Eyes and Ears to the other side of the water," was to be a request for a French priest.<sup>52</sup>

They arrived at Watertown on July 10th, and at the official conference on July 12th they delivered their documents and their message:

The Almighty has given the Americans and the Indians one heart. We are on the American side. We want a Father — or a French Priest. Jesus we pray to, and we shall not hear any prayers that come from old England. We shall have nothing to do with old England, and all that we shall worship or obey will be Jesus Christ and General Washington. . . . All our old

<sup>51</sup> Allan to Mass. Council, Nov. 21, 1776; cited in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 107.

<sup>52</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:502 ff.

Men and Women pray that the Almighty would enable us to walk in the right way. . . .<sup>53</sup>

The Massachusetts Council, in its answer to the Indians, given on July 13th, declared its own sentiments on the religious question:

You told us you prayed to our Saviour Jesus and wanted a French Priest to assist you in your prayers. We are glad to see you have such a regard for Religion, and are ready to furnish you with a priest to assist you in your prayers and teach you the *true* Religion: [*Italics inserted*] but we do not know that we can get a French Priest. If one of our Priests would be agreeable to you, we will endeavor to get you one, and will take care that he be a good man. . . .

On that same day the House of Representatives resolved: "that the Council be desired and are hereby impowered to provide some suitable person *of our own profession* to officiate as a minister among the St. John and Micmac Tribes and the Government will allow him a suitable compensation for his services."<sup>54</sup>

It happened that while these Indians were still in Boston they were "strongly urged to join in the war: and accordingly they have engaged to do it and signed a Treaty for that purpose."<sup>55</sup> The treaty referred to, which was signed on July 19th, contained no word of religion or of a priest. Before the St. John group left for their home with the results of their conference, they met a delegation of Penobscots who arrived in Boston on the 20th of July. The Penobscots also asked for a priest.

We have been destitute of a Priest these twenty years and it grieves us that we can't pray to God as we used to do. Our young people have not been baptized these twenty years and it is a great grief to us.

Their speech then continued with a statement which reflected their experience of the past year in Boston and Canada, and

<sup>53</sup> Washington had already left these parts after the British evacuation.

<sup>54</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:511; *Mass. Court Records*, 35:177 (*italics inserted*).

<sup>55</sup> Bowdoin to Washington, July 30, 1776, *Baxter Mss.*, XIV, 362.

also, quite clearly, that of the past day or two in Boston. It declared:

If you will take our own case into consideration and give your approbation *in writing*, we will get a Priest *to our liking*. And as soon as we get home and you shall give your approbation *in writing*, we will go to Canada and procure a Priest *ourselves*, and we shall be able to communicate what is transpiring there and will bring you the news. . . . It is the desire of many of our neighboring tribes <sup>56</sup> that we should have a Priest to live with us and then they will come to us and pray with us.

In a later part of the conference, on the same day, the Penobscot speaker, after having mentioned other desires of his tribe, summed up their attitude: "The greatest thing among us is the want of a Priest, and if we can have your Honor's approbation, we shall procure one." And at the next day's meeting, he reasserted this desire:

All that we want to be satisfied in is the assurance from you that we might have a priest to sit down quietly among us. . . . We are afraid the consequence will be, if there is no Jesuit sent among us, the young people will go to Canada and they might be brought over to act against the Colonies; but having a Priest among us, they should be quiet.

A résumé of this conference was handed to the whole body of the Massachusetts Council. To this the Council drew up the following reply which "was consented to by the Council and immediately signed by those who were present":

We have a sincere desire that all Men may live in the full Enjoyment of all their Rights, civil and religious. Yet, however just and reasonable the above mentioned requests may be, it is not in our power to grant full relief, as the General Court is not now sitting and we are only a part of the Legislature. As soon as the General Court meets, which will be the latter end of next month, we will lay these proposals or requests before them and we cannot doubt but that they will readily afford all reasonable relief in the premises, and trust it will be to the satisfaction of the whole Tribe; and if it should be so,

<sup>56</sup> The St. John? The St. Francis?



it will afford us much pleasure, as we wish to promote your peace, welfare and happiness, and live by you as friends and brethren.<sup>57</sup>

In accord with its promise, the Council presented the matter to the General Court at its meeting on August 28th. The sentiment of the House on the matter is best understood by its own answer: "With respect to the Penobscot Indians, this House is very desirous of cultivating their friendship and ready to afford all the aid in our power towards gratifying them in their reasonable requests."<sup>58</sup>

Thus, again, the Massachusetts Legislature gave approval and offered aid, but did not give its explicit approbation in a written document. As in the treaty with the Nova Scotia Indians, it manifested a notable unwillingness to go on record in the matter of the Catholic religion. This silence was partly responsible for the Nova Scotia Indians' refusal to ratify the treaty, and partly responsible also for a second and hurried journey of John Allan to Congress. He set off at once for Washington's headquarters on the Delaware, and from there he continued on to Baltimore, where Congress was sitting. The result of his mission was in brief a promise by Congress to provide a priest for the Nova Scotia Indians. Allan was appointed Congress' agent to make with them a new treaty which, like the one they had with the British authorities, explicitly took care of their religious needs.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the St. Johns' objection to the treaty, these Indians continued "to a man, hearty in [the American] cause." Meanwhile, their desire for a priest, which had sent Allan to Congress, persisted, and when occasion arose in January, 1777, to send a delegation to Boston, they again instructed their agent, Ambrose Bear, to ask for a priest.<sup>60</sup>

When Ambrose arrived in Boston in early February, 1777, he found there his friend, John Allan, who had just returned from

<sup>57</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 29:530-534.

<sup>58</sup> *Mass. Court Records*, 35:183 and 206, Sept. 6, 1776.

<sup>59</sup> Citations in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 111 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Jonathan Eddy to General Court, Jan. 5, 1777; John Prebble to Mass. Council, Jan. 27, 1777 (*Baxter Mss.*, XV, 40, and XIV, 405). See also General Washington to these Indians, Dec. 24, 1776, in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 112.

Congress. They remained in Boston until early April, Allan urging the advantage to Massachusetts of a Nova Scotia expedition, and especially of the aid of the Indians. Finally, on April 2nd, Allan was able to report to Congress that "some particular demands which [the Indians] made, [and which] appeared to them to be of some importance," had been settled. "Every obstruction is now removed, with the greatest appearance of satisfaction on the side of the Indians."

It is certain that at this time the Massachusetts Council took into consideration the Indians' request for a priest. On March 18th it read Prebble's letter of January 27th in which that request was mentioned, and ordered the letter committed to the committee which was handling Nova Scotia affairs. But no special action needed to be taken in the matter, because this was already provided for in John Allan's mission from Congress.<sup>61</sup>

The news of Allan's mission to the Indians, including that part which promised them a priest, arrived on the St. John River before Allan himself. Transmitted to British sympathizers, it was brought by them to Halifax, where the authorities immediately busied themselves to circumvent the American plans. Part of the British policy then decided on was to offer the Indians a priest themselves. On May 11th Colonel Arthur Gould, the British agent who had arrived on the St. John River a few days before on the British warship, the *Vulture*, held out to them the Government's willingness to *hire* Father Bourq as a *government* missionary for them.<sup>62</sup>

Allan did not arrive among the Indians until after the British agent's departure. On June 5th, at Aukpaque, he met delegates from the several tribes, including the St. Johns and the Passamaquoddies, who were assembled for that purpose. As agent of the United States, Allan concluded with them a

<sup>61</sup> Allan to Hancock, April 2, 1777, *Papers of Cont. Cong., Letters*, A, 78, I, 63; printed in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, III, 376; see also Sprague's *Journal of Maine History*, II (1915), 236; *Mass. Council Records*, 20:281, 301, 302; *Mass. Court Records*, 37:72, 132.

<sup>62</sup> *Pub. Arch. Can., Col. Corr. Gen., Nova Scotia*, XI, 147; *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 369; Raymond, *Glimpses*, p. 270; *Baxter Mss.*, XV, 91; *ibid.*, XIV, 415.

solemn treaty of peace and friendship, which contained the stipulation "that they should enjoy the free exercise of religion, agreeable to their professions, a clergyman of that denomination be furnished and a suitable residence provided for him, on which a place of worship was to be erected." <sup>63</sup>

Some of the Acadians in Cobequid, Nova Scotia, when they learned that the American Government was going to furnish a priest, decided to move onto American territory. <sup>64</sup>

Massachusetts' interest in this treaty was soon manifested, for through the operations of superior British forces, John Allan and his supporters were driven away from the St. John River onto Massachusetts territory. Thus by the end of July, Massachusetts had on its soil some five hundred Catholic Indians, who by reason of their treaty with the United States had the right to practice their religion, and by reason of Congress' promise, also had an expectation of receiving a priest. <sup>65</sup>

The Indians themselves were hardly settled at Machias when they "made earnest entreaties for a priest to be sent them as soon as possible." One of them told Allan that "the French priests [advocates for Britain] had debarred the Indians from marrying — would not authorize any father to perform the ceremony nor yet do it themselves, also told them if they [any priest] offered to do such an act, the person officiating would be prosecuted in Halifax by the Government." <sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Allan, *Journal*, in Kidder, *op. cit.*, pp. 95, 311. See also his letter to General Court, June 18, 1777, in *Baxter Mss.*, XIV, 430, which is absolutely silent about both treaty and priest.

<sup>64</sup> Allan, *Journal*, June 26, 1777, "Receive intelligence that all the people of Cobequid, Nova Scotia, were to remove about the Popish Priest." In Kidder, *op. cit.*; see Griffin, *op. cit.*, II, 117; *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 370, June 12, 1777.

<sup>65</sup> The story of this migration is well summed up in Raymond's *Glimpses of the Past*, pp. 274 ff., depending on Allan's *Journal*, which itself is partly printed in Kidder. The chapel bell was the one which had been presented by the French King to the Medoctec church, and had been taken from Medoctec in 1767 when that village was abandoned. As at that date the ornaments and furnishings of the chapel were also removed, one may imagine that they were included in this new migration. The bell later hung in the French village near Woodstock, where it was unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1904.

<sup>66</sup> Allan, *Journal*, Aug. 26, July 28, 1777; in Griffin, *op. cit.*, II, 118. Perhaps the information in this last was the result of a visit of the St. John Indian delegation to Quebec in the summer of 1777, referred to by Carleton in letter to Arbuthnot, Feb. 23, 1778. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 376.

Allan had not included the Penobscot tribe in this treaty. When he was at Congress he supposed that "it was under the immediate jurisdiction of the General Court [of Massachusetts] . . . and that things were carried on reciprocally for the interests of the States as well as [of] the Indians." However, on Allan's return from the St. John River, he had a conference with a delegation from the Penobscots, who "made heavy complaint of impositions and extortions, and insisted upon being connected with the other tribes." They also had told Allan of the inducement offered to them by a British agent. Allan on his part, fearing lest the whole tribe should be drawn off from the interest of the States, "used every encouragement possible and presumed," as he said, "to agree with them on the same footing, as I did with the other tribes, which they immediately published on their return to Penobscot."<sup>67</sup> There can be little doubt that by this agreement the Penobscots were likewise assured of their religious rights under the United States; but no specific statement to that effect is available.

#### IV

In the meantime, the Government here was also facing the question of removing all legal restrictions on Catholic worship. During the year 1777 the Legislature of Massachusetts had been planning a new frame of government for the State. In this matter it had lagged behind the other States, all of whom, south of New England, had already passed new constitutions.

The Bay State's Legislature, reluctant to risk a possible overturn in the long-standing framework of government, successfully resisted the popular desire for a special constitution-making body, to be elected on a very broad base. Persisting in its determination to retain the initiative, it was finally, in June, 1777, given the mandate to sit as a constitutional convention.

Even in these circumstances, so unfavorable to any radical change, the legislative committee appointed to draw up the new

<sup>67</sup> John Allan to Jeremiah Powell, Sept. 22, 25, 1777; in *Baxter Mss.*, XV, 223, 229.



frame of government gave proof of a comparatively remarkable religious tolerance. In this regard the draft, which they presented on December 11th for consideration by the Convention itself, was highly significant, more perhaps by what it omitted than by what it contained. It made no mention of religious freedom, religious toleration, or religious restrictions. In this respect it involved a radical departure from the terms of the previous charter. Had this draft been accepted, toleration of Catholics would no longer have been unconstitutional in Massachusetts. Even though the draft included a retention of the anti-priest law, together with all other laws existing under the charter, a repeal of that restriction on Catholic worship was made legally possible. Nothing more than toleration of Catholicity, however, was envisaged; any place in the Government was denied to Catholics by being explicitly reserved to Protestants. As events turned out, this draft of a new Constitution did not receive the popular approval; it was indeed overwhelmingly rejected. But this rejection was not motivated by the implied concessions to Catholics; on the contrary, what evidence exists indicates that the people were already eager for a Bill of Rights which included Catholics.

In fine, the first two years of the Revolution had brought about a very considerable overturn in Massachusetts' religious viewpoint. The original determination to preserve a charter under the British Constitution had been replaced by the will to form a completely new frame of government. The need of help to preserve its independence had given birth to the Colonial Federation, and also to the gradually enlarged view of its religious outlook. Eagerness to obtain the aid of Catholics compelled consent to tolerate their worship, first for the Catholic Canadians in Canada, then for the Catholic Indians in Massachusetts. A further step remained, toleration of Catholic worship for all Catholics in Massachusetts.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> References for this section will be found in the following chapter, where the discussion of the draft of the Constitution is treated in more detail. Prominent members of the Committee which made the draft were Robert Treat Paine, James Warren, James Prescott, and Thomas Cushing.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FREEDOM OF RELIGION (1778-1780)

BEGINNING IN 1778, religious events in Massachusetts moved steadily toward the acknowledgment of freedom of conscience. The French alliance, which became known in Boston in early May of the year 1778, was of such an extraordinary importance that it rightfully dominates the whole history of that time: but there were two other important events, both of them anterior to the knowledge of this alliance in America and both remarkable in their effect on Catholic history in this State. The first of these was the people's rejection of the proposed new frame of government. By this decision the people manifested their insistence upon a more liberal constitution than that which had been proposed by the Legislature, and at the same time equivalently expressed their willingness to grant freedom of religion to Catholics.

The second of the two events in question was John Allan's renewed appeal to the Continental Congress for a priest for the Catholic Indians of Maine. As a result, Congress did order a priest to be sent from Philadelphia to Machias and, even though the priest did not actually arrive, this action of Congress was epoch-making.

#### I

In Massachusetts the question of tolerating Catholicity, debated both in the Legislature itself and among the people of the State, came to an indirectly affirmative answer.

The Legislature of 1777, sitting as a Constitutional Convention, and examining its Committee's draft for a new State Constitution, arrived on February 6, 1778, at the question of religion. The Convention immediately adopted an article (no.

29) by which the executive, legislative, and judicial offices within the State were reserved to Protestants. After that, ensued a lively discussion which involved freedom of religion. The meagre minutes of the secretary show that on February 6th the Convention passed an order that "a clause be brought in, making Provision for Liberty of Conscience." Thereupon the draft was recommitted,<sup>1</sup> and the Committee accordingly brought in such a clause, which the Convention considered on at least one day before February 12th. For, according to the minutes, on February 12th, it

*resumed* the consideration of the clause brought in by the committee, making provision for Liberty of Conscience and, after debate thereon, the question was put whether same be accepted, and it passed in the negative. It was then . . . voted that the following be an article in the Constitution, viz: "The free exercise and enjoyment of Religious Profession and Worship shall forever be allowed to every denomination of Protestants within this State."

This became article 34 of the proposed Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

This article was word for word the same as that which the State of New York had adopted in the previous April, except that the Massachusetts article substituted the words "every denomination of Protestants" for New York's words "all men." Undoubtedly a minority in the Convention had forced a consideration of the New York article, but the majority refused to extend a constitutional guarantee of freedom of worship to all mankind, or even to all Christians. By restricting this to Protestants, and leaving members of other religions wholly subject to legislative goodwill, the majority would make Massachusetts unique among all the States.

Within a week after the Legislature had finished its proposed new Constitution, popular opposition to it began to be expressed. The town of Newburyport sounded the first note of dissatisfaction, declaring its objections in some detail. It rec-

<sup>1</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 156:285-286.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 156:287. See *Journal of the Convention of 1779-1780*, pp. 263 ff., where the 1778 draft is printed.

commended a convention of the towns in Essex County to reform the proposed Constitution "agreeably to the natural rights of mankind and the true principles of government." The suggested county convention, which began its meetings on April 15th at Ipswich, explicitly condemned article 34, "because the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship are there said to be *allowed* to all the *Protestants* in this State, when in fact that free exercise and enjoyment is the natural and incontrollable *right of every member* of the State." The county convention's committee, of which Theophilus Parsons of Newburyport was the active member, then drew up a plan of constitution that would be acceptable. The committee's report was approved by the Essex Convention and dealt a death-blow to the Legislature's proposal.<sup>3</sup>

In Boston a similar wave of opposition arose. During the month of April, the newspapers, in almost every issue, carried criticisms of the proposed form of government, which were aimed particularly at the lack of a Bill of Rights and the inequality of the mode of representation. Specific demand was made for the extension of the guarantee of liberty of conscience to all Christians.<sup>4</sup>

A plea for accepting the proposed constitution, on the grounds that it "is probably as good a one as we could reasonably expect to be formed under the present difficulties," fell on deaf ears. The form was unanimously rejected by the 968 voters who passed on it at the May town meeting in Boston.<sup>5</sup>

Almost as great opposition was manifested in other parts of the State. By October 12th, the official report declared: "the returns made to the General Court from the several towns and plantations respecting the constitution of government lately agreed upon by the convention of this State, are as follows,

<sup>3</sup> *Newburyport Town Records*, I, 288-289; Theophilus Parsons, Jr., *Memoir of Chief Justice Parsons* (Boston, 1859), p. 50. On the story of the Massachusetts Constitution, see especially Harry A. Cushing, *History of the Transition from Provincial to Commonwealth Government in Massachusetts* (New York, 1896).

<sup>4</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, April 2, 9, 16, 30, 1778; *Boston Gazette*, April 13, May 11, 1778; *Massachusetts Spy*, April 23, 1778.

<sup>5</sup> May 25, 1778, *Report, Record Commission*, XXVI, 22 ff.



viz: Yeas 2083; Nays 9972. N.B. 129 towns and plantations have made no return.”<sup>6</sup>

The popular verdict was unmistakable. By the overwhelming ratio of five to one, the people of Massachusetts thus equivocally demanded a constitutional guarantee of freedom of worship for Catholics, as well as for other non-Protestants, like that already recognized in the other great States of the Union.<sup>7</sup>

## II

During this same period, but under a different incentive, the Continental Congress had actually provided a priest for the Catholic Indians of Maine. The series of events which culminated in this action of Congress began before the French alliance was made, and was due to the persevering Catholicity of the St. John Indians. Throughout the latter months of the year 1777, John Allan, Congress' agent for the Eastern Indians, had awaited in vain the fulfillment of Congress' promise of a priest for them, which he had made in Congress' name. Finally, in the first days of 1778, he was compelled by British competition to make another appeal. He had learned that the British Indian agent, Michael Franklin by name, equally unsuccessful on his side of the border in obtaining a priest for the St. John Indians, was seriously renewing his efforts to provide one. In the autumn of 1777, Franklin, on a visit to the St. John district, had repeated the Government's previous assurance, and when he returned to Halifax the authorities there took up the business with vigor. On December 24th, the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia sent an express to Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor of Quebec, desiring that he would obtain permission

<sup>6</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Oct. 12, 1778.

<sup>7</sup> Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, North Carolina, Georgia, New York, and Vermont. Vermont had a Bill of Rights in which Article III stated that "every sect or denomination of people ought to . . . support some sort of religious worship," and also guaranteed that "no man ought, or of right, can be compelled to . . . erect or support any place of worship or maintain any minister, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience." In 1781, a law was passed authorizing taxation, for support of religion, with the usual exemption for dissenters. Cf. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

from the Bishop for Father Bourg to reside among the St. John Indians.<sup>8</sup>

When John Allan learned of this and of the other preparations of the British to establish themselves strongly on the St. John River, he renewed his own efforts to oppose them. Among other means he summoned an Indian council at which, in late December or in January, he undoubtedly promised the Indians to do everything possible for them, and specifically to obtain them a priest.<sup>9</sup>

On March 3, 1778, Allan's first assistant, Lieutenant-Colonel Phineas Nevers, left Boston for Congress and undoubtedly mentioned this matter there, for, on his return to Boston in early June, he brought word that Congress had provided a priest whom it had ordered from Philadelphia to Machias.<sup>10</sup>

The priest in question was probably that same Father Lotbinière of whom mention has already been made. He is the only priest known to have been in the service of the United States at that time; and in February, 1778, he had just been assigned to a campaign which was shortly cancelled, and would have been free to go to Machias. As a matter of fact, however, he did not go.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, on May 16, 1778, Allan received exciting news in Machias. First, from the British side came an invitation to the Indians to go to the fort on St. John River, "where they should receive everything they wanted gratis, where also was expected a Priest every day and no other condition required of them but to keep still." This was the result of General Carleton's reply to the Nova Scotian Government's request for Father Bourg. By April 8th, the Halifax authorities knew that that missionary had been ordered by Bishop Briand to go to Halifax and receive there instructions relative to his mission on

<sup>8</sup> Arbuthnot to Germain, April 8, 1778; *Pub. Arch. of Nova Scotia*, vol. 45, doc. 51; Raymond, *Glimpses*, p. 285.

<sup>9</sup> Allan to Mass. Council, Nov. 18, 1777, *Baxter Mss.*, XV, 287; see also, *ibid.*, 289, 293.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 334, 363; *Papers, Cont. Cong., Memorials*, 41, VII, 21; 4 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, IV, 240; *Mass. Court Records*, 38:558; *Mass. Council Records*, Nov. 12, 1778, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, I, 47.

the St. John. They had sent word to the Indians immediately. Allan was embarrassed.<sup>12</sup>

The second news came from Boston, and told of the French alliance with the United States. Allan joyfully made immediate announcement of this to the Indians, and proposed that they send their representatives to Boston "to pay their compliments to some French officer . . . and to supplicate for a priest." This proposal was received by the Indians with universal applause; the delegation for Boston was chosen and set out under care of Allan's assistant, Lieutenant De Lesdernier.<sup>13</sup>

The Indian delegation arrived in Boston on June 9, 1778. There the Council was able to tell them about the priest already ordered by Congress to proceed to Machias and wrote a gracious letter to the tribe. In their dispatch to Allan, after passing on the information given by Colonel Nevers, they even went so far as to say, "A priest will be procured in Boston if possible to serve for a few weeks among the Indians."<sup>14</sup> Evidently they thought that the French fleet might supply one temporarily.

### III

By this time Boston, as well as the rest of America, was greatly excited about the French alliance. On May 5, 1778, the French frigate *La Nymphe* arrived in Boston Harbor. It was commanded by the Chevalier de Sainneville, whose story of his two weeks' stay in Boston graphically pictures the enthusiastic reaction to the French alliance here. For example, at the dinner given to him on his arrival by the President of the Board of War, he mentioned

one enthusiastic person, [who] after having taken something to drink, threw his arms around my neck in his rapture at seeing me in their midst. He congratulated me on being the

<sup>12</sup> *Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 376; Arbuthnot to Germain, enclosing Carleton to Arbuthnot of Feb. 23. See above, note 8.

<sup>13</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XVI, 12 ff.; *Mass. Council Records*, June 11, 1778, p. 248; *Mass. Court Records*, 38:557.

<sup>14</sup> June 11, 1778, *Mass. Court Records*, 38:558.

first war-ship of the King of France seen in Boston and forced me to agree with him that my situation was an epoch-making one.

Boston's traditional antipathy to things French and Catholic was subordinated to its grateful expectation of necessary aid. It had already anticipated the advice given by Congress

to all the inhabitants of these States, to consider the subjects of his Most Christian Majesty as their brethren and allies, and that they behave towards them with the friendship and attentions due to the subjects of a GREAT PRINCE, who with the highest magnanimity and wisdom, hath treated with these United States on terms of perfect equality and mutual advantage, thereby rendering himself THE PROTECTOR OF THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND.<sup>15</sup>

The Bostonians confidently expected that, with French help, Rhode Island, New York, and Nova Scotia would be subdued to the American States before the conclusion of the present campaign. On July 30th, the news came that the French fleet had arrived at Point Judith to assist in the reduction of Rhode Island. By August 5th, "Assurance of success is displayed in every countenance [in Boston] and all [the volunteers] expected to return in a few days victorious and loaded with plunder."

It was all quite otherwise with the Tories, one of whom recorded in his diary:

To see these people, who had always the greatest aversion to the manners, religion and government of the French, now rejoicing in their alliance and exulting in their assistance, affords a most striking instance of the perverseness of the human heart, and displays beyond example the obstinacy, the madness, the folly, the perfidy of my countrymen. Rather than yield to the most prevailing convictions of reason, rather than comply with the most sacred dictates of conscience and religion, I may add, rather than be happy in the enjoyment of their liberties and possessions, they choose to rush headlong into

<sup>15</sup> Continental Congress on Treaty with France, May 6, in *Boston Gazette*, May 25th.



guilt, misery and ruin, and to entail upon themselves and posterity the most ignoble servitude.<sup>16</sup>

The Patriots, however, were disappointed in their hopes, when, on August 11th, during a naval engagement with the British fleet, a terrible storm arose and the French suffered much damage. Disappointment then turned into resentment, for the French Admiral, the Count D'Estaing, decided to leave Newport and proceed to Boston, where he could get repairs, provisions, and care for his wounded men. One of his ships was already here when D'Estaing himself with the rest of the fleet arrived at Nantasket Roads on August 27th, to face a people now "very ill-disposed to the French, because of the supposed abandonment of Rhode Island,"<sup>17</sup> and the "prejudices . . . which had been raised by an honest but indiscreet warmth in some officers employed in the expedition against Rhode Island."<sup>18</sup> The French Admiral, however, by his explanations, his tact, and his generosity, saved the day, in conjunction with some high American officials, rightly eager for harmony among the allies.<sup>19</sup>

But the common people still kept their ancient antipathy to support their new resentment. "For a century and a half, all their [Bostonians'] political and religious prejudices, and the recollection of Indian warfare, had made everything French particularly odious to the northern colonists,"<sup>20</sup> and this deep antipathy was then shown. In Boston itself, on the night of September 8th, a riot broke out against the French; two French officers who rushed to the scene were seriously wounded, one of them, as it turned out, mortally. He was the Chevalier de St.-Sauveur, one of D'Estaing's chief aides and formerly

<sup>16</sup> Jacob Bailey, *Journal*, July-Aug., 1778, in Bartlet, *A Frontier Missionary*, pp. 357 ff.

<sup>17</sup> D'Estaing, *Report*, in H. Doniol, *Participation de la France à l'Établissement des États-Unis* (5 vols.: Paris, 1886-1892), III, 447 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Cooper to Franklin, Jan. 4, 1779, *Franklin's Works*, VII, 416.

<sup>19</sup> *Continental Journal & Weekly Advertiser*, Sept. 3, 1778: C. Tower, *Le Marquis de Lafayette* (3 vols.: Philadelphia, 1926), I, 491 ff.; Sparks, *Washington*, VI, 57-59; Cooper to Franklin, Jan. 4, 1779; cf. also *Mass. Council Records*, 1778, for Aug. and Sept.

<sup>20</sup> Wm. Tudor, *Life of James Otis* (Boston, 1823), p. 153.

first chamberlain to the brother of the French King. Who were actually responsible for the riot it is impossible to determine. Massachusetts authorities did their best by investigation, proclamation, and reward to apprehend the rioters and thus placate the French.

On the French side, however, Count D'Estaing, again eager to smooth over the unfortunate situation, took the cue that had been previously suggested by Lafayette in the Rhode Island affair, and blamed the whole incident on "the common enemy of the allies who hesitated at nothing"; he later told General Heath in person that he was convinced that the townsfolk had no hand in the affair. This became the official version.<sup>21</sup>

Despite this quasi-official explanation, it is almost impossible to exclude from the story the matter of Boston's opposition to Catholicity, and there is some documentary evidence which plainly indicates its presence. In the first place, a letter or letters sent at this time to ex-Governor Hutchinson in London gave him reason to record in his *Diary*: "Sept. 9. Yesterday it was said that the people in Boston were in great commotion from the arrival of two French Priests, encouraged to go there by Dr. Franklin. It is difficult to acquire any certainty of the state of things there."<sup>22</sup> Also in a letter to Lord Hardwicke, dated October 30th, Hutchinson wrote:

There have been frays at Boston between the French and English Seamen, and contentions *about suffering the host to be carried in procession to the sick*. One of the Deacons could never be persuaded by his Minister that Lord North was not a Roman Catholic and that I was not . . . employed by him to introduce Popery. They [then] carried about the Pope, the Governor and the Devil in procession and burnt them in effigy. The same Deacon is still living, and I think he will use his endeavours *to prevent this new kind of procession*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, Sept. 9, 1778, p. 443; *Independent Ledger*, Sept. 14. For this whole incident, see Fitz-Henry Smith, Jr., in *Proceedings of the Bostonian Society*, Jan. 15, 1918, pp. 31 ff.; and the documents referred to there.

<sup>22</sup> *Brit. Mss.*, Egerton, 2665.

<sup>23</sup> Hutchinson to Lord Hardwicke, London, Oct. 30, 1778, *Gay Transcripts* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

Although no other direct evidence of this is known, these statements fit in nicely with an incident which happened just before the riot, during the daytime of September 8th. Count D'Estaing made a request to the Council, through his secretary, relating to the sick belonging to his ships. And the Council granted him permission to land them "on Governor's Island, from time to time, as occasion shall require, during the stay of his fleet in the harbor."<sup>24</sup> If any of D'Estaing's sick sailors had been previously cared for in the city, they could well have been visited by their chaplains, who thus might have had occasion to carry the Host through the streets.

The attitude of some of Boston society differed from that of the common people. In this connection, it is interesting to note what William Tudor wrote, many years later, about the French officers in Boston, recalling at the same time that French navy chaplains ranked as officers:

[The Reverend] Dr. [Samuel] Cooper was the confidential correspondent of Dr. Franklin, who recommended to him the French officers who came with the forces of France to this country. They were mutually pleased and . . . the hospitality of the inhabitants to their new allies was both frank and general, yet much of this feeling was owing to the natural gratitude for assistance, in a time of adversity; but the prudent and excellent conduct of the French officers, joined to the facility with which the people of that nation adapt themselves to different circumstances, contributed to remove ancient dislike, and to create a lively friendship. Dr. Cooper was delighted with these new friends, papists as they were, and the feeling was reciprocal.<sup>25</sup>

There was no doubt where Dr. Cooper stood on the French alliance. He praised D'Estaing "for his abilities . . . his bravery, and zeal for our common cause [which] are indisputably great. . . . He bore [the unmerited reflection made against him] with a manly patience and uncommon prudence. I admired his firmness, silence, and condescension."<sup>26</sup> The Rev. Dr. Cooper was

<sup>24</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 1778, p. 442.

<sup>25</sup> Wm. Tudor, *Life of James Otis* (Boston, 1823), p. 153.

<sup>26</sup> Cooper to Franklin, Jan. 4, 1799, *Franklin's Works*, VII, 416.

at that time chaplain to the General Court, and it was through his efforts that when the French officer St.-Sauveur died, on September 15th, as a result of the wounds in the riot, arrangements were made for his interment in a vault of King's Chapel. The American authorities were much disturbed at the death, and General Hancock and the Town Council offered a fine funeral (and the General Court voted to attend in a body), but these offers the French declined. They agreed on a private funeral at night and burial in a vault in King's Chapel.<sup>27</sup> Besides voting to attend the funeral, the General Court resolved "that this Government will provide a monumental stone to be placed in the burial ground where [St.-Sauveur's] remains shall be deposited, with such inscription as His Excellency, the Count D'Estaing, shall order."<sup>28</sup>

The death of St.-Sauveur may possibly stand in some connection with another reflection of the religious situation in Boston at that time. Very shortly after the actual death of the French officer, a story made its appearance in New York to the effect that one of the Boston churches had been turned over to D'Estaing for use as "a Popish Chapel, where Mass was celebrated, which caused unspeakable murmurs amongst all the conscientious people of that place." The story was given out in New York under date of September 19th, and made to appear as news from Boston.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the Government had made the offer of a church for the funeral services of St.-Sauveur, and the rumor arose thereby. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the story was more than a rumor. In a description of the Episcopal church in 1778, the author, who was the Anglican minister, Mr. J. W. Weeks, of Marblehead, asserted: "The French had received leave from the Congress to make use of *Christ Church* in Boston for the purpose of their worship, but the proprietors of it having notice of this persuaded Mr.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in L. Vicomte de Noailles, *Les Marins et Soldats Français en Amérique pendant la Guerre de l'Indépendance* (Paris, 1903), p. 47.

<sup>28</sup> Sept. 16th, *Mass. Court Records*, 37:619. The memorial was finally erected in 1917.

<sup>29</sup> Oct. 29th. Reprinted in *Boston Continental Journal* from Rivingston's *Loyalist New York Royal Gazette* of Sept. 21st.



Parker to preach in it every Sunday in the afternoon by which means it remains untouched.”<sup>30</sup>

Whatever be the truth of the story about the French and Christ Church,<sup>31</sup> it is certain that Mass was celebrated in Boston at that time. The French chaplains performed that service during the two months' sojourn of the fleet, both on board the ships in the harbors and also at the barracks on Governor's Island, where the sick and wounded members of the French expeditionary force were quartered. The French were Catholic, and it is abundantly clear that, although every effort was made on both sides to manifest cordiality, Bostonians, in general, were personally unsympathetic. Mrs. John Adams, who generously entertained the French officers and was entertained by them in turn, declared that she had “been the more desirous to take notice of them, as I cannot help saying that they have been neglected in the town of Boston. Generals Heath and Hancock have done their part, but very few, if any, private families have any acquaintance with them.”<sup>32</sup>

Those Bostonians who did meet the French officers had extraordinarily nice things to say about them.<sup>33</sup> Mrs. Adams, for example, declared that the Admiral had been exceedingly polite to her, and she spoke of

the temperance of these gentlemen, the peaceable quiet disposition of both the officers and men, joined to many other virtues which they have exhibited during their continuance with us. . . . Not one officer has been seen the least disguised with liquor since their arrival. Most that I have seen appear to be gentlemen of family and education.

Rev. Samuel Cooper was full of praise and admiration, not only for D'Estaing, but also for his officers.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Hawkes Transcripts, Mass.*, 11, 455, in *New York Hist. Soc.*

<sup>31</sup> Rev. A. Eliot, *Historical Account of Christ Church* (Boston, 1824). For more on Mr. Lewis, cf. Bartlet, *A Frontier Missionary*, p. 358.

The records of Christ Church show that it was closed from April, 1775, “until August, 1778, when it was again supplied by the services of the Rev. Stephen Lewis.

<sup>32</sup> Abigail Adams, *Familiar Letters*, Oct. 25, 1778 (3rd ed., 1841), I, 132.

<sup>33</sup> John Adams to Mrs. Warren, Dec. 15, 1778, *Works*, IX, 474.

<sup>34</sup> Cooper to Franklin, Jan. 4, 1779, *Franklin's Works*, VII, 416.

But the anti-French feelings of the ordinary folk were little changed thereby. New cases of fighting between French soldiers and American sailors occurred on September 28th-29th, in which one French marine was arrested for abusing a constable and an American sailor was haled aboard a French frigate for abusing a Frenchman.<sup>35</sup> The Council had to take action on October 6th, when it was informed that "there is assembling in the streets of the northerly part of Boston a riotous tumultuous set of people that threaten devastation." It ordered General Heath to use the troops, if necessary, to repress disorder.<sup>36</sup> On the very day when D'Estaing's fleet left the harbor, the Council had occasion to pass a resolve against the anti-Catholic celebration of Pope Day, November 5th, because "it has been represented to this Board that some people are so destitute of consideration as to make Pageantry to be exhibited in . . . Boston on the morrow, which appears to the Board of dangerous consequences."<sup>37</sup>

The generally unsatisfactory reaction of Boston to the French at that time is vividly portrayed in the successful attempt made by Gérard, the French Minister at Philadelphia, to obtain Dr. Cooper's services as a paid propagandist. When Gérard learned that the distinguished clergyman had published several articles in defense of D'Estaing, at the time "when General Sullivan had excited the whole East against the Admiral and the French," he wrote the Doctor a letter of thanks. At the same time he suggested that the French Government would gladly make it worth his while to continue "to employ his talents and influence in the same cause." Dr. Cooper's "answer was so full of goodwill," reported Gérard to his chief at Paris,

and seemed to me so significant that I engaged a friend of [his] to come to a definite understanding with him. The proposition was very well received; he named an annual recompense of two hundred pounds sterling, as an indemnity for what he had lost and suffered in the common cause, and a means of

<sup>35</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 184:256; *Mass. Court Records*, 30:650.

<sup>36</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 169:200.

<sup>37</sup> *Boston City Archives*, uncatalogued. Nov. 4, 1778.

paying a vicar whom he wished to employ, that he might devote himself exclusively to the work which he was taking on.

He explained to the French Foreign Minister that

Dr. Cooper was an intimate friend of Dr. Franklin, that he was the best orator in Massachusetts and one of the principal promoters of independence in New England. To his political talents, he joins the religious authority which the outstanding clergymen must have with a people, who preserve a deep strain of fanaticism and religious enthusiasm.

It seems to me, my Lord, that a man of such weight is worth buying, even at this price and I have just made with him the agreement requested.

The same Gérard had already taken the famous Thomas Paine into a similar employment; and he went on, in his letters to the Count de Vergennes:

Dr. Cooper plans to inspire among Americans the respect and admiration which are due to the King [of France], esteem for the French nation and confidence in the intentions and policy of His Majesty, and to make use of all the materials suitable for such an important purpose; he is eager for me to furnish these and to ask you to send me whatever will be of service in this regard. By attacking the unbelievable prejudices against us which the British have set themselves to preserve among Americans, he hopes to help the personal union and trust between the two nations and to destroy the individual aversion with which Americans only too often continue to regard us.<sup>38</sup>

#### IV

Just before the French Admiral left Boston, he was visited by a delegation of Catholic Indians from Maine. They had

<sup>38</sup> Conrad Gérard, to Vergennes, *dispatch 54*, Philadelphia, Jan. 17, 1779, *Arch. Aff. Etrang. corr. pol. Etats-Unis*, vol. 7, fol. 91. Printed in H. Doniol, *La Participation de la France à l'Etablissement des Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1886-1892), IV, 60-61.

Dr. Cooper remained in the pay of the French Government until his death in December, 1783. Letter of May 13, 1787, to the author from Dr. J. J. Meng, who depended for his information on the financial report of La Luzerne, furnished by Father O'Donnel. (Cf. W. Emmet O'Donnel, *The Chevalier de La Luzerne* [Bruges, 1938], pp. 52-53.)

been waiting in vain all summer for the arrival of the priest, promised them in June. In fact, they had been moved by this expectation to take an active stand on the American side, even to the extent of declaring war against the British. But while the Americans had only the promise of a priest to work on, the British actually had the presence of a priest to counteract them with. Between August 16th and 21st, Father Bourg had arrived at Halifax, where the Government arranged to allow him the stipend of one hundred pounds annually, "which had ceased when the priest who had officiated until 1773 returned to Quebec."<sup>39</sup> As soon as arrangements could be made for Father Bourg's passage to the St. John, he went there, in company with the Indian agent, Franklin. Father Bourg criticized the Indians for not having remained neutral, but offered to receive them if they decided to remain neutral henceforth; otherwise, he said, he must, by the orders of the Bishop of Quebec, excommunicate them. The Indians yielded.<sup>40</sup>

Allan regarded the British action as "a desperate push . . . such that I am sometimes jealous whether I can repel the torrent." As he analyzed the Indians' action, he considered it due to the changed attitude of the British to them and the "valuable presents which they gave," but most of all to

the spiritual threats of the Priest. . . . Their zeal for the Roman Catholic religion, their being a long time without a Priest, Confessions, Absolutions, Baptisms, Marriages, and the other Sacraments of that Church, being in their ideas so necessary for temporal and eternal welfare, not having had any administered for a long time, seemed to stagger the most zealous for America that were in this place.

In another place, Allan also stated that they

resented much that a priest had not been sent down [from Philadelphia or Boston], when such promises were made the

<sup>39</sup> *Notes of M. Placide Gaudet, Quebec Arch.*; Hughes to Germain, Aug. 29, 1778, *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 379; Knox to Lords of Trade, Dec. 8, 1778, *ibid.*, p. 381.

<sup>40</sup> *New Brunswick Hist. Soc.*, I (1894-1897), 313 ff.; Raymond, *Glimpses*, p. 285; *Heath Papers*, in *Mass. Hist. Soc.; Pub. Arch., Nova Scotia*, vol. 45, doc. 65.



two young men when in Boston the past June, particularly when they understood that so many priests are in Boston.<sup>41</sup>

Allan had a hard time to prevent even his own Indians from going to visit Father Bourg.<sup>42</sup> On October 3rd, he sent an express to those Indians who were with Father Bourg, detailing his sorrow

to find that such impressions are made on your minds by an ecclesiastical person, who is hired by the bloody King of England, to introduce the concerns of the soul, so as to exert and prompt you, by spiritual threats to join in masercring [*sic*] your countrymen in America. Could you have the letters suitably interpreted to you, you may see that deceit predominant, which has hitherto actuated the councils of George the Third. This proceeding of Mr. Burk [*sic*] I shall duly transmit to Monsieur Gerard, Plenipotentiary from the Most Christian King to the United States.<sup>43</sup>

He then announced to them the plan which he had agreed on with his own Indians, to send

two of our tribe to pay another complement to France and America, and request a Spiritual Father, for the business of the Church, not to interfere in politics, for such things I think are not the business of clergymen. For observe, if a Priest pursues his duty as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, he will find sufficient to do to prepare souls for salvation, without managing war affairs and other matters of this life.<sup>44</sup>

Allan's proposal met universal applause among his own Indians. Allan told the Massachusetts Council that "the principal matter at present with them is a Priest." If he could not get a priest for them, he doubted his ability to keep them.<sup>45</sup>

The Indian delegates duly came to Boston and met the French Admiral, but were unable to get a priest from him because he was preparing to leave Boston. Their request, however, was passed over by him to M. Holker, the French agent at Boston. The Indians were definitely left under the impres-

<sup>41</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XVI, 107 ff.

<sup>42</sup> Allan to Mass. Council, Oct. 8, 1778, in *ibid.*, 100.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, XVI, 95.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Allan to Mass. Council, Oct. 8, 1778, *ibid.*, XVI, 107 ff.

sion that the French authorities would see to their getting a priest.<sup>46</sup>

They also obtained an extraordinary encouragement from the Massachusetts Council, by whom they were received on November 12th. They told the Council that they came here because they were "poor; poor [they said] on account of our religion. We should be glad that your honours would help us to get a priest. It is a priest we want. . . . We are promised from the French with a priest; we enjoy their religion and are willing to enjoy it under the American government." The President of the Council, Jeremiah Powell, had the interpreter tell them:

We wish it was in our power to afford them that assistance required by them respecting a priest, and although it was not in our power at present, yet the Council would use their utmost endeavours to furnish them with one.

The Council will make it their business to represent to Congress their destitute situation and make no doubt they will take the same into consideration. Although we differed from our Brethren in religious sentiments, yet we would wish that they may have every assistance in that respect.

On that same day, the Council wrote to the Continental Congress, giving an account of the conference, and the Indians' request for a priest.

We wish [they said] it was in our power to supply them, as we apprehend the residence of such a person among them of good political character, might tend to attach them more closely to the United States & prevent our Enemies making ill impressions on their minds.<sup>47</sup>

On December 5, 1778, the Continental Congress took up that letter and informed the Council of Massachusetts that "it is the desire of Congress that they comply with the request of the Indians in sending them a priest." On December 8th, President Laurens wrote this to the Massachusetts Council.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, 1778, p. 531; *Independent Chronicle*, Nov. 12 and Dec. 3, 1778; Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, I, 322; II, 119. Holker wrote to Gérard on the matter.

<sup>47</sup> *Mass. Arch., Rev. Letters*, 200:204, Nov. 12, 1778.

<sup>48</sup> *Journals of Congress*, XII, 1189. *Mass. Arch.*, 200:247.

It was as a result of these divers steps that the Augustinian priest, Rev. Hyacinthe de La Motte, was finally employed by the American authorities to go to the Maine Indians. He had served as chaplain on a large French armed vessel, and had been taken captive with his ship and brought to New York in February, 1778. With other officers he was permitted by the British authorities to go at large within the city on their parole. Father La Motte was solicited to perform divine service and asked the commandant's permission for the purpose. The permission, it seems, was refused, though Father La Motte afterwards alleged that, owing to his ignorance of the English language, he understood the permission was granted. He officiated, and for this he was taken up and put in close confinement, and there remained for some time until he was exchanged.<sup>49</sup>

Some extant evidence indicates that even before Admiral D'Estaing left Boston, he had Father La Motte in mind for service among the Maine Indians. This priest was among the prisoners whose exchange he had arranged with the British Admiral Gambier at New York, but whose arrival in Boston was delayed. D'Estaing on his own departure assigned to Holker, the French agent at Boston, the necessary further arrangements about them. Only on December 4th was the agent able to announce to the Massachusetts Council that these arrangements had been completed, and that some four hundred and seventy French prisoners (including Father La Motte?) would be transferred to Boston.<sup>50</sup>

The Augustinian set out from New York on December 19th with other prisoners, on "*le Parlementaire appelé Senaut* [Snow] *Dabbody* [*sic*] for Boston."<sup>51</sup> On January 6th, however, they were landed at New London, as being "too sickly to pro-

<sup>49</sup> Extract taken from the notebook of Maj. George Repelye, of New York, and deposited with other documents under the cornerstone of New St. Peter's Church, New York, on Oct. 26, 1836 (*The Green Banner*, New York, Nov. 5, 1836); this extract is almost identical with that in *Letters of Papinian*, IX (New York, 1779), in Rivington's *Royal Gazette* of New York, July 17, 1779 (*New York Hist. Soc.*); *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXVI (1909), 59.

<sup>50</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 200:241.

<sup>51</sup> *Arch. Nat.*, *Corr. Consulaire*, Boston, I, fols. 6, 7. On folio 23, the snow is named "Happy Released Cartel."

ceed to Boston.”<sup>52</sup> In due time Father La Motte went to Boston, where he arrived before February 19th and visited General Gates. The latter informed the Council that he considered him “a man of abilities and learning and that he is willing to go to the St. John Tribe of Indians and officiate among them.” On February 19, 1779, the Massachusetts Council Records contain the item:

Whereas the Honble Congress by a letter dated the eighth of December last, desiring the Council of this State to comply with the request of the St. John's tribe of Indians by sending them a priest, and it has been represented to this Board that a suitable person, proper for this business is now in the town of Boston, therefore informed Gen. Gates that it would be entirely agreeable to them that he should go on this mission, and they leave it with you to authorize him to go accordingly by such commission or other writing as you may think proper.<sup>53</sup>

Shortly after this date John Allan came to Boston on business and by March 26th he had had a conversation with the priest. As a result he made certain recommendations to General Gates. Father La Motte would

need a commission or some other written authority from the States, as he is suspicious should he be taken [captive] he might suffer as an imposter. [His having this, Allan added], would be of service, for the Indians would view him as of more consequence, and furthermore, [it] would be a check upon him, to prevent any behaviour which might tend to discredit the intention of his mission. His salary must be fixed. Several articles he will want immediately, which are necessary for his business, which cannot be secured but at a very great expense.

Allan also suggested to Gates that two French officers be employed. “The clergyman must have one with him, for necessary matters, essential to his business, and one more will be very useful for assisting in negotiating affairs.”<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 24, under date of Jan. 6, 1779.

<sup>53</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 200:321; Gates to Sullivan, Boston, Feb. 22, 1779, *Sullivan Papers, Letters*, IV, 223 (ms. copy in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*).

<sup>54</sup> Allan to Gates, March 26, 1779, *Gates Papers* (New York Hist. Soc. Box 11, no. 297).



After all these preparations had been made and word of the priest's coming had been sent to the Indians, Allan's party set out from Boston on May 13th. Besides the Colonel and Father La Motte, it included two French officers, Captain D'Abadie and Lieutenant Ferré, obtained through the help of the French Consul. They arrived at Machias on the 18th, Allan "flattering himself," as he wrote to General Gates, "by the friendship existing between me and Father La Motte, that our business will go on with harmony and satisfaction." Allan immediately got in touch with the Indians,<sup>55</sup> and Father La Motte himself also made his presence known to them by the following letter:

May 19, 1779

To our Dear Children, the Savages,  
Living at Passamaquoddy.

Dear Children: Knowing that for a very long time you sigh and ask with the strongest ardor for a priest to instruct you with regard to your eternal salvation and to bring you back in the path of the Lord, I cannot, my dear children, but congratulate you upon such pious sentiments and such Christian and holy views to obtain the benediction of Almighty on all your undertakings.

The King of France, our common father, solicitous for your happiness, and to convince you and to give you an authentic mark of the sincere friendship he always had for you and that he always will have for you, if you deserve the continuation of it, sends me to you, my children, in concert with the United States of America, our allies and good friends, to remind you of your duties, your obligations and your engagements towards so good a Prince, to defeat soon and entirely our common enemy, and profit afterwards in time of peace, of your father's heritage. Our common Father will not neglect anything to gratify all your wishes and to make you happy. Your cries have reached to his throne, have excited the tender sensibility of his heart towards you. May you correspond to it, my children.

I hope, my children, to have soon the pleasure to see you all together at Machias. I await that moment very impatiently.

<sup>55</sup> Allan to Gates, May 18, 1779, *ibid.*

I shall speak to you more at length at our first meeting. I arrived yesterday at half-past two, and I write you to-day and send you as a proof of my devotion and of my invariable attachment, a wampum pledge of peace, which the bearer will give you from me, and which I beg you to accept with the same sentiments.

I give my best regards to you, to your chiefs, your wives and your children and I am for life with the sincerest friendship,

Your affectionate,

de La Motte, R. Aug.

Chaplain of the King's Vessels.

To the Chiefs and young men living at Passamaquoddy.

N.B. I beg of you to circulate my letter among you.<sup>56</sup>

On the 20th six Indians from Passamaquoddy came to Machias with the desired message for the priest. They told him that

they were now convinced of the sincerity behind the frequent promises made to them about sending a priest, that they were heartily devoted to the King of France, that they would spread everywhere the news of Father La Motte's arrival, and that they were eager to undertake anything in defense of our allies, the Americans.

Father La Motte himself believed that even the Indians who had sided with the British would now come over to the Americans; and he assured General Gates that he himself would neglect nothing to bring this about. At the same time, he informed the General that none of the promises made to him at Boston had been kept.

I would never have believed that I am expected in return for two rations and them not complete, to pay for the missionary outfit, ornaments and books myself, and to give my youth as well, without hope of other recompense than risking

<sup>56</sup> Translation in Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 120; see also Shea, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, II, 182. A photostat of the original is in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

my life every day of being captured by the English. I will bend every effort to give you every satisfaction and prove that personal profit is not my motive, but you will permit me to state that it was wrong to make promises to me and not to keep them at all.<sup>57</sup>

At first Father La Motte's presence and zeal were of great advantage to the American cause. In face of the British naval victory in Penobscot Bay, he was of particular value in keeping the Indians loyal to America. In fact Allan was embarrassed in giving assignments to him, "as the different villages [were] constantly contending who [should] have him." In early July the Penobscots had sent a delegation. "Their zeal concerning having the Priest with them a little [obliged Allan, he said] to part with him for the present." On the priest's return from there, July 17th, Allan wrote that "his behavior and conduct has given me much satisfaction. He is indefatigable in the business."<sup>58</sup>

Father La Motte himself, however, was not pleased with his situation. Indiscreet by nature and fluctuating in temperament, weakened in physique by his long sojourn in prison, he was also unprepared by training for the arduous duties of an Indian missionary. Fatigued by the long trips to Penobscot, sometimes in want of even enough food, and disgusted by the living conditions encountered among the Indians, he was also bitterly disappointed at the unfulfilled promises of the States, which compelled the use of his own money for necessary expenses. Besides all this, he hotly resented the contemptuous attitude of one of his companions, the deistic Captain D'Abadie.

Finally, he conceived the injudicious idea of accompanying some of the Indians to the St. John. Despite Allan's opposition, he even broached the notion to the Indians in open council and in Allan's presence, using the pretext that he would go

<sup>57</sup> La Motte to Gates, May 20, 1779, *Gates Papers*, II, 276 (*Mass. Arch.*, 170:81). The Council ordered on May 10th "delivery of two rations for three months to the Rev. Mons. Hiacinte La Mott."

<sup>58</sup> Allan to Powell, July 16-18, 1779, *Mass. Arch.*, 201:172-174; *Baxter MSS.*, XVI, 362.

"*en parlementaire*." <sup>59</sup> A sudden call for Indian aid at Penobscot, combined with Allan's prudent handling of the situation and Father La Motte's own sense of duty, brought about a new phase of successful activity on the priest's part. He zealously aided the preparations for the expedition to support General Lovell, animated the Indians by his promise to go with them to battle, and actually accompanied the relief party that was too late.

A renewal of the plan to go to Canada, and the manifestation of some disrespect to Colonel Allan completely ended Father La Motte's usefulness to the American cause. Colonel Allan, therefore, formally requested the French Consul to have him removed.

I am ever cautious in characterizing any person, nor would I presume to attempt it to the disadvantage of any [one], where private animosity was concerned; but the duty I owe my country and the interest and honour of her Allies forbids me to neglect it. I have been at a loss for a long time to know the real intentions of Monsieur La Motte; or what disposition he was formed of; nor would I at any time believe the various reports — brought to me: indeed so convinced was I of his integrity and honour towards me that I forbade any such tales coming to my ears.

Then, after acquainting the Consul with the whole story, Allan concluded:

I am far from being an enemy to the man [and] rather pity than censure his disposition. . . . But, upon the whole, [I] must acquaint you that Mr. De La Motte must be removed from here; and [I] solicit with the greatest importunity to have another, which I doubt not you will endeavour to procure.<sup>60</sup>

The French Consul agreeing, Father La Motte was recalled, before November 18th, when the Indians at their council at

<sup>59</sup> Father La Motte to de Valnais, Oct. 3, 1779, in *Haldimand Papers* (Pub. Arch. Can.). The British had sent an ordinary agent and then Father Bourg himself to the St. John to counteract his influence, Franklin to Germain, Aug. 3, 1779 (*Report, Can. Arch.* [1894], p. 383).

<sup>60</sup> Allan to Valnais, Sept. 18, 1779, *Haldimand Papers*,



Machias requested Allan to "do your endeavour to get a Priest from our old Father, the King of France, to settle among us." <sup>61</sup>

## V

The French alliance, which had thus made possible the fulfillment of the Patriots' promises to furnish a priest to the Indians, had also changed the rôles of the contending parties, relative to Catholicity in general. A French officer declared in 1779:

The Royalist party tries to excite distrust among the people on account of their alliance with papists. . . . The Republican party . . . proves to the people that if they separate from France they are lost.

The King's men then proclaimed sentiments like those of Robert Auchmuty, a Boston Loyalist, who had gone to London. He wrote to his sister in Boston in early 1779:

For the Americans to connect themselves with a people whose faith and promises are no more to be relied on than the most glaring and notorious falsities, whose manners and customs are immoral, irrational and destructive, whose government is most unjust, arbitrary and wicked, and whose religion is nothing more than an audacious mockery of Heaven . . . astonishes every true lover of civil and religious rights.<sup>62</sup>

In one of the articles of Papinian, addressed "To the People of North America," the writer dilated on the encouragement given by Congress and its leaders to Catholicism, and the fatal danger thus constituted to Protestantism.

In very many districts of the Continent and in some of New England [he proceeds], where popery was formerly detested,

<sup>61</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 144:302-304. The last reference to Father La Motte at Machias in Allan's correspondence was Oct. 27 (*Baxter Mss.*, XVII, 409-410). Massachusetts Government pay rolls in the *Mass. Arch.*, 37:146, made his time of employment run from Feb. 4th to Dec. 1st. Cf. also Father La Motte to Valnais, Oct. 4, *Haldimand Papers*; *Washington's Writings* (Fed. ed.), VIII, 141; *Mass. Arch.*, 202:28-32; *Mass. Council Records*, Feb. 16, 1780.

<sup>62</sup> Cited in *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXVI (1909), 264 (March 13, 1779).

and scarcely a papist was to be seen, numbers of popish books are now dispersed and read with avidity. I could name a member of the rebel council in one of the New England colonies, who was formerly considered as a zealous Protestant dissenter, who not long since harangued a large assembly of people on some of the disputed points between Protestants and Papists; such as the invocation of saints, purgatory, transubstantiation [*sic*], etc. After palliating each of these, straining the sense to put the most favorable and the least offensive construction on them, and softening them with as much art as the most subtle disciple of Loyola could use, he finally declared that he saw nothing amiss or erroneous in them: and his audience seemed to be wonderfully pleased and edified.<sup>63</sup>

The writer later spoke of

the amazing change of people's sentiments in favor of Popery, a consequence of the French alliance, . . . Protestant dissenters were supposed formerly to be more averse from Popery than other Protestants. . . . The true distinction at present . . . is that of Loyalist, a friend to King and Constitution, and that of Rebel, a friend to Independence and a French faction. . . .

The new French Minister, M. de La Luzerne, also reflected a similar situation in Boston, when reporting his first stay in the city:

The ministers [La Luzerne used the word *prêtres*] to whom Roman Catholics were formerly so odious, continually pray for the success of their allies, and I [myself] have heard their churches ring with the petitions addressed to God for the preservation of the King [of France] and the royal family. If they wish to make a person odious to his fellows, they charge him with Toryism, although those who really are Tories are [now] refugees. . . . The majority of the French who have been drawn to Boston by commercial reasons rejoice in the treatment they receive here both from Government and people.<sup>64</sup>

There can be no doubt that this situation was reflected in Massachusetts' new Constitution. A special Convention, elected

<sup>63</sup> Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, July 17, 1779 (*New York Hist. Soc.*), cited in Shea, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>64</sup> La Luzerne to Vergennes, Sept. 3, 1779, in Doniol, *Participation*, IV, 326 ff.

on the broad base of free adult suffrage for the sole purpose of drafting a constitution, convened at Cambridge on September 1, 1779.<sup>65</sup> This assembly, unlike the former one, had the invaluable services of John Adams. He had just returned from France, where his broadening experience as a United States Commissioner rounded out the liberal theories of government in which he had long been interested. It was he who drew up for the Convention the entire draft of their new document, with the possible exception of one article in the Bill of Rights. The fate of the previously proposed document indicated that the new plan must include a Bill of Rights and its guarantee of liberty of conscience.

The overwhelming sense of the assembly on this point was shown by the immediate passage of the first two articles in Adams' draft, which dealt with it. The first article, almost identical with George Mason's draft for the Virginia Bill of Rights, declared the natural freedom of all men and their endowment with certain inalienable rights. The second secured freedom of worship to all men. This was the great boon for Catholics; it made unconstitutional any further legislation in Massachusetts against their religious profession or sentiments, such, for example, as the laws of 1647 and 1700. These two articles were immediately accepted by the Convention.<sup>66</sup>

The third article, which had to do with the support of religion, was, however, the subject of a free and general debate. The draft presented to the Convention was based on the two propositions: first, that "good morals [were] a necessity for the preservation of civil society," and second, "that the knowledge and belief of the being of God, His providential government of the world, and of a future state of rewards and punishment [were] the only true foundation of morality." These two premises were acceptable to the great majority of the Convention; but the conclusion drawn from them, that "the legislature ought to provide, at the expense of the subject, if necessary, for

<sup>65</sup> For this Convention and its result, see both the *Journal of the Convention* (Boston, 1832) and S. E. Morison, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.* for May, 1917.

<sup>66</sup> *Journal of the Convention*, Oct. 30, p. 37.

the suitable support of the public worship of God and of the teachers of religion and morals," encountered sharp opposition.

It was too broad for the majority, because it made no distinction between Christian and non-Christian. It was a courageous although impracticable attempt to establish, not any single form of religion, but Religion itself.

After several days of debate, a new draft for article 3 was drawn up: it was both more explicit and less broad than the original one. It required the bodies politic, such as the towns and the religious societies, to be the State's agents in providing the desired support of religion. And it excluded any other than the Christian religion as its form of establishment by assuring equality under the law only to "every denomination of *Christians*." Even in this narrowed scope, the new draft was not unanimously received. Its implied inclusion of Catholicity gave an occasion to some members to give expression to their ancient anti-Catholic bigotry.

The debate resulted in some amendments to the revised draft. What these were does not clearly appear from the official records, but they are probably reflected in two places of the final form. One of these qualifies the word "Christians" by the clause, "demeaning themselves peaceable and as good subjects of the commonwealth"; the other was the addition of the words "public Protestant" to the original "teachers of religion and morals." <sup>67</sup>

The Convention adjourned on November 12th. Almost immediately its vote on the three articles of the Bill of Rights was made known to the French Minister at Philadelphia, who reported to his Government thus: it appeared to him

to be a very sensible document, well-fitted to establish in that State a good government. The redactors have ventured to propose to their constituents the admission of all religions which recognize the Old and New Testaments. These people were

<sup>67</sup> *Journal of the Convention*, Nov. 10, p. 46; see C. F. Adams, in *Works of John Adams*, IV, 222, n. 7. It is probable, but not certain, that the word "Protestant" was not in the Committee's revised draft. See the reaction of the town of Boston below.



originally marked by the most violent intolerance and when they made their first establishment sanctioned corporal punishments for the exercise of the Catholic religion, and infamy against Quakerism. The proposal now made to them has become the occasion of lively debates.<sup>68</sup>

The Constitutional Convention resumed proceedings on January 27, 1780, and sat until March 2nd. Because of the bad weather, there was a much reduced attendance during this session; the highest number of delegates who voted on any occasion was eighty-two. The religious question appeared again at this session in relation to the qualifications for and oaths of office. The proposal to restrict office-holding to Protestants was rejected when the matter was first considered; and, except for the office of Governor, no religious restriction was passed.<sup>69</sup>

The matter was, however, revived indirectly in the discussions on the oath of office, where again the opponents of Catholicity made themselves heard. In this instance they were victorious.

To John Adams' simple form, declaring belief and profession of the Christian religion and faith and true allegiance to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was now added the abjuration of

all allegiance, subjection, and obedience to the king . . . of Great Britain and every other foreign power whatsoever. And that no foreign prince, person, *prelate*, state or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction . . . authority, *dispensing or other power*, in any matter, civil, *ecclesiastical or spiritual*. . . . And . . . that no man or body of men hath or can have any right to absolve or discharge me from the obligation of this oath . . . and that I make this acknowledgment . . . without any equivocation, mental evasion or secret reservation whatsoever. . . .<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> La Luzerne to Vergennes, Philadelphia, Dec. 2, 1779, photostat in Library of Congress; *Aff. Etrang., corr. pol., Etats Unis*, vol. 10, fol. 103. John Adams left for France on Nov. 13.

<sup>69</sup> The Governor had to "declare himself to be of the Christian religion."

<sup>70</sup> Feb. 25, 1780.

These words were in great part repetitions of the old pre-Revolutionary oath.<sup>71</sup>

Again the French Minister La Luzerne reported to his Government:

The plan which Mr. J. Adams left at his departure for Europe is the base [of the document]. There were discussions on the point whether a senator, before assuming office, should take an oath that he was of the Protestant Religion. The debates, though animated, were carried on with decency, and principles of tolerance for Catholics were shown, all the more laudable because this State was formerly the theatre of the most violent persecutions. In some of the speeches, stress was laid on America's obligations to the French King and nation. It was even asserted that if the State of Massachusetts was in a position to draw up its own Constitution, it owed this precious advantage in large measure to His Majesty. In the end, it was decided by majority vote that the oath in question would not be demanded, and that there would be substituted for it an agreement [*sic!*] to renounce all ecclesiastical or civil authority outside the State.<sup>72</sup>

When the draft was presented to the towns for adoption, most of the discussion centred on the religious articles and the qualifications for office. In the Boston town meeting in May, 420 of the 471 voters suggested amendments to article 3 of the Bill of Rights along very broad lines. They wished "that equal liberty [be] granted to *every religious* sect and denomination *whatever* and that it [be] only required that every man should pay to the support of publick worship *in his own way*." Therefore, it amended "Publick Protestant teachers of religion" and "denominations of Christians" by the words, "all religious denominations whatsoever."<sup>73</sup>

A new session of the Convention, which began on June 7th,

<sup>71</sup> The word "dispensing" was new. The words "ecclesiastical or spiritual" of the old oath had been removed from the British oath in England in 1778. See E. Burton, *Life of Bishop Challoner*, II, 184 ff.

<sup>72</sup> La Luzerne to Vergennes, March 20, 1780, photostat in Library of Congress; *Aff. Etrang., corr. pol., Etats Unis*, vol. 11, fol. 92.

<sup>73</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXVI, 129.

declared on June 15th that the Constitution had been adopted and would go into effect on the last Wednesday in October.

Thus freedom of worship came to Catholics in Massachusetts. Based upon the desire for aid from Catholics, both Indian and French, this direct effect of the doctrine of Natural Rights replaced both charter and British Constitution in this State. It replaced the essential exclusiveness of the whole colonial tradition of Massachusetts. It was, in fine, one of the most important, and at the same time unexpected, results of the Revolution.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HOPES UNFULFILLED (1780-1788)

THE ADOPTION of the new Massachusetts Constitution, which allowed Catholic worship, did not lead immediately to the establishment of a Catholic church. Although the white Catholics of the State, French and Irish, naturally hoped for a priest, now that their religion was legally permitted, they were disappointed: eight years, in fact, went by before a Catholic congregation here was actually formed. Nevertheless, Catholic services were occasionally celebrated here, and Catholicism itself had an important historical development.

During the first two of these years — that is, until the end of 1782 — these services were made possible by the chaplains of the French fleet. Their first outstanding contribution to the Catholic religious history of New England at this time lay in providing at least one priest and possibly a second also for the Catholic Indians of Maine. Thus they both continued the religious tradition of these Catholic pioneers and offset the religious advantage which the British possessed in their regard during the war. Furthermore, these French priests actually performed Catholic religious services in Newport and Boston and some few other places, and gave opportunity to French Catholics to satisfy their religious desires.

They likewise played an indirect part in our religious history at this time by their influence on a further decrease in New England opposition to Catholicity. Their religious services were sometimes attended out of both courtesy and curiosity by some Bostonians, among whom were at least two ministers of the Gospel. The very presence of the French as allies induced a sense of obligation among Bostonians which showed itself in a softening of anti-Catholic prejudice.

But the French armed forces left America at the end of 1782,



and most of their chaplains departed with them. Of the few who remained, only one is mentioned in connection with New England, and he only in passing. During the succeeding years, two other priests, both French, although not chaplains, visited Boston; one in 1783 and the other in 1785. Neither of them remained to fulfill the hopes of Catholics for a church.

The visits of these priests were occasioned by the existence here of an important French colony that remained here, but the very smallness of the colony and the lack of any financial assistance to them in a religious way, both effects of the French official policy of non-interference in religious affairs, prevented the success of any attempts to establish a church. Nevertheless, in the end, the Church here was begun by a French priest.

The history, therefore, of the Catholics in New England during the period 1780 to 1788 is almost exclusively French. Nevertheless, behind that French factor was also another, whose history is more or less unknown, and yet very important. The Irish immigrant — the Catholic Irish immigrant — was likewise present and eager for the consolation of religion as well as for industrial opportunity. Lack of a priest, and lack of the social and political prestige which might have furnished one, prevented the satisfying of that desire. These Irish Catholics, although numerous, represented no independent country whose power could be thrown on their side and whose favor would be gratefully sought out. They were individuals; they were likewise poor; laborers rather than merchants. Yet they had numerical strength and an anti-British feeling to throw into the scale on the side of America. Their hostility to England was, in great part, religious; their presence in America was due to their love of religion as well as of economic opportunity. It is one of the ironies of fate that, even after religious freedom was legally guaranteed in Massachusetts, no priest of their own race came here to serve them. Indeed, it is one of the mysteries of this eight-year period that little, if any, mention is made of their religion. It must be assumed that they, as well as the French Catholics, hoped ardently for the opportunity to practice their faith; yet this is, in the present state of the documents,

only a deduction. Catholic Irish influence in matters religious here in these days remains one of the imponderable factors of history. It must be estimated in the light of their later history. In fine, although in that period the Irish Catholics clearly emerged into the visible phase of Massachusetts history, the religious part of this is still largely a matter of conjecture.

It was the French who played the major rôle in the documents of the period.

## I

Less than a month after the adoption of the new Massachusetts Constitution,<sup>1</sup> the second French fleet came to America.<sup>2</sup> Its presence here gave opportunity to American leaders, especially the oft-mentioned John Allan, to seek out a priest for the Catholic Indians of Maine, and to obtain one in the person of Father Frédéric of Bourges.

The British, who were active on the St. John, had a special advantage over Allan. They were hourly in expectation of the Acadian Father Bourg's arrival "to continue at the Fort"; and this the British agent took care to emphasize in the invitation which he sent to the Indians to meet him on the St. John.

Although Allan took the extraordinary (but unsuccessful) step of inviting this priest to cross into the American lines under safe-conduct for ministering to his Indians,<sup>3</sup> he was disappointed. The priest did not accept, and the Indians decided to go across the English lines to see him. They told Allan that they were sorry, but that they must go. "We know him and he knows us. He can administer the sacraments in our own language." When they arrived at the English fort, and the priest told them to break off every connection with the Americans, their chief replied, "No, we will not, neither my children, my nephews, myself nor any of our connections . . . we remain firm friends with Americans." True to their promise to Allan, they did not stay within the British lines after seeing the priest,

<sup>1</sup> June 15, 1780.      <sup>2</sup> July 11, 1780, it landed at Newport.

<sup>3</sup> *Report*, May 28, 1780, *Baxter Mss.*, XVIII, 284.

but removed into the interior toward the Passamaquoddy Lakes, nearer the Americans. This was partly due to word from Allan of the arrival in Newport of a French fleet and the chance of getting a priest for them from there. "Do not neglect sending us news . . . about the French [they wrote], and when we shall see a priest to lead our souls right."<sup>4</sup>

Allan, of course, sent word of all this to Boston and his agent went to Newport to apply to Admiral De Ternay "for a priest to go to Machias for the Indians."<sup>5</sup> The French complied. By August 18th one of the chaplains of the French fleet had been assigned to the work. And the commanding officer himself gave him rosary beads, medals, and other religious articles for the Indians.<sup>6</sup> The priest was Father Frédéric of Bourges, a Capuchin of the Touraine Province, whom their Provincial, Father Paul, of Orléans, appointed to the naval chaplains' service at the French Government's request in May, 1779. He accepted the Maine mission "willingly, in order to be as useful to the Christian religion and to the advantage of my King and his allies as I could."

Arriving in Boston by August 23rd, he immediately petitioned the Council "to send [him] to his mission as quickly as [they] could and to furnish him all things necessary for his voyage for attracting the Indians and specially for the exercise of his ministry's offices."<sup>7</sup>

On the same day the Massachusetts Council and the French Consul addressed almost identical letters to the Eastern Indians. The Boston authorities wrote very diplomatically:

Brothers, your good and ancient fathers, the French, our great, good and illustrious Allies, hearing of the destitution you were in on account of a Reverend Father to take care of your Souls, have in their great goodness sent one, to whom you may tell your faults, and he will hear you, and will admin-

<sup>4</sup> *Report*, July 1, 1780, *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XVIII, 345; *Mass. Arch.*, 144:456-457.

<sup>6</sup> Franklin to Germain, Nov. 21, 1780; *Report*, *Can. Arch.* (1894), pp. 391-392.

<sup>7</sup> Printed in *Baxter Mss.*, XVIII, 378. For Father Frédéric, cf. John Lenhart, "Two Revolutionary Chaplains in Government Employ," in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XXIII (1937-1938), 446-466.

ister the Sacrament of his order in your own way. His stay will be but short as he cannot be spared from those he came with.<sup>8</sup>

Owing to the British occupation of Penobscot, communication between Boston and Machias was uncertain, and Father Frédéric was unable to leave Boston until late October.<sup>9</sup> By November 14th he had arrived at Machias. It was, therefore, about a year since the Indians had had a priest from the American side. Those of them who had gone to St. John River in June to see Father Bourg again flocked to the American standard.<sup>10</sup> At the end of November, Allan brought Father Frédéric to Passamaquoddy, saw to the encampment, and had "a small house built for the business of the winter."<sup>11</sup>

After the Christmas celebrations Allan expressed his complete satisfaction with Father Frédéric.

The priest appears [he wrote] the most calculated for the Indians than any I ever saw, either from the French or Britains. The steps he has taken [and] the conduct he pursues gives the Indians the greatest satisfaction, and which (if he is permitted to tarry) will be of the greatest utility and benefit in securing the interest of the Indians. And I am now well convinced, if suitable supplies are laid in for the Indians to prevent their going to the Britons for necessaries, the whole of them, as far as Canada, will joyn [the States]. . . . After settling all matters, I returned [to Machias] the 6th of January, leaving the Priest and Lieutenant Delesdernier: the former, being aged and so infirm, could not stand the cold in an open boat. [On] the 25th [January] the Priest and Mr. Delesdernier returned to Machias.<sup>12</sup>

At the end of February Father Frédéric went again to Passamaquoddy "to celebrate Lent." (Ash Wednesday was on Feb-

<sup>8</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XVIII, 76; see Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, II, 122, for a very similar letter of the French Consul. Among other supplies furnished by the Council to Father Frédéric were "15 gallons wine — for the purpose of the ceremonies in the business of his order."

<sup>9</sup> J. Allan to Powell, *Baxter Mss.*, XIX, 105.

<sup>10</sup> On Sept. 26th Allan had sent the news. *Report, Can. Arch.* (1894), p. 391.

<sup>11</sup> Memo of John Allan, Jan. 26. 1781, *Baxter Mss.*, XIX, 105. <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*



ruary 28th that year.) The priest stayed only eight days that time.<sup>13</sup> However, by June 1st he went with Lieutenant Delesdernier to the Indians' encampment to settle down with them and gradually drew most of the pro-American Indians to the place. Allan considered that his "behaviour and conduct [had] been of the most essential service in securing the Indian interest," and when there was some question in June about the salary to be paid him, he stated this to the Massachusetts General Court.<sup>14</sup> Before the end of the summer, however, the priest had to leave to rejoin the French fleet<sup>15</sup> which was about to sail.<sup>16</sup> It was in great part due to him and the French fleet that America retained the Province of Maine. He had kept the Indians active on the States' side and the French had driven the British clear of the coast.

## II

During the time that Father Frédéric had been serving the Passamaquoddies, the Penobscots had been attended by a certain Recollet missionary, Father Juniper Berthiaume. His is a most mysterious story, as yet not fully understood. That part of it, however, which regards his employment by the State of Massachusetts is known. It runs thus:

When, in September, 1780, the Penobscots learned that a priest from the French fleet had been obtained for Machias, they were much concerned to obtain one for themselves. Because of their difficulty in going to Machias, with the British forces lying between them and the east, they besought their commander, General Wadsworth, to obtain a priest from the French fleet for them also, and they sent a delegation of six to Boston to bolster up their request. Again Orono, the chief, headed their group, which arrived in Boston in early October. The General recommended their petition to the Government

<sup>13</sup> John Allan to Governor Hancock, March 17, 1781, *Baxter Mss.*, 189.

<sup>14</sup> Memo of John Allen, June 20, 1781, *Baxter Mss.*, XIX, 371.

<sup>15</sup> *Combattants Français de la guerre Américaine* (Washington, 1905), p. 174.

<sup>16</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1780-1781*, p. 727. Massachusetts charged his salary to the United States; cf. *Mass. Arch.*, 146:596.

and the Government recognized the wisdom of acceding to it; for these Indians might not always resist the tempting offers constantly made to them by the British.<sup>17</sup> Orono's group went to Newport and they, too, had their petition granted.

Back in Boston by the 24th of the month, they showed themselves eager to return to their home.<sup>18</sup> And when, on their return, they were delayed in Boston a few days by the wind, the French Consul "gave them encouragement that they [might] have a priest to go with them, provided that they tarried a few more days . . . till the priest [could] have [the Legislature's] orders to go down with them." Colonel Brewer, the Penobscot truckmaster, therefore petitioned the General Court "to give order that the said Priest may be permitted to go and proper provision made for him." The Legislature took this petition into account in their meeting on Monday, October 30th, and on November 4th resolved "that the Commissary General be and hereby is directed to make provision for the Accommodation and Subsistence of the Person whom the French Consul has recommended on his way to joyn the Penobscot Tribe in order to reside with them as an Instructor." On November 6th the Senate concurred with this resolve, which the clerk described as "Making Provision for a Priest to go among the Penobscot Tribe of Indians."<sup>19</sup>

The name of the person in question appears first, in Colonel Brewer's petition of November 7th, as Juniper Berthiaune, Recollet. (In the Resolve of November 11th it is written Berthiaune.)

There is every reason to believe him identical with a certain Recollet lay brother of the same name, who left Montreal in late October, 1779, to carry letters from some Canadian sympathizers to the States. He passed through the Indian mission of Sault St. Louis on October 30th, not in his religious habit

<sup>17</sup> Gen. Wadsworth to Massachusetts Council, Boston, Oct. 7, 1780, *Baxter Mss.*, XVIII, 460.

<sup>18</sup> *Mass. Council Records, 1779-1780*, pp. 433-435. See also La Luzerne to Vergennes, Nov. 19, 1780, in *Arch. Aff. Etrang., corr. pol., Etats Unis*, vol. 14, fol. 72 (Library of Congress photostat).

<sup>19</sup> *Senate Journal, Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1780-1781*; see also *Mass. Arch.*, 230:75; and 144:463; *Baxter Mss., loc. cit.*, 15, 16, 36, 37, 39.

but disguised as an Indian. After his departure from Montreal there was a rumor there that he was the courier of the clergy and that his own superior was involved in the affair. The Canadian authorities, both military and religious, made search for him in vain. They learned that he had crossed the border.<sup>20</sup>

As a matter of fact, by December 12th, a religious of the Recollet Order arrived at General Schuyler's camp at Albany. He had left Canada, he said, with the permission of his Superior and was to set out on December 13th to see General Washington.<sup>21</sup> However, he had not arrived at Washington's headquarters on December 25th, when the Commander-in-Chief wrote to General Schuyler, "Your Recollet has not yet appeared in this quarter."<sup>22</sup> Nothing indeed is known of the Recollet's history from then until he turned up in Boston about October 28, 1780.

It may be permitted to hazard a guess at his history in the intervening ten months. From Albany he probably went first to Philadelphia, to the French Minister, and delivered to him the letters sent from Canada. To him he probably also disclosed his long-cherished desire to go to France to study further, and his sympathy for the American cause. The Minister then might well have aided him to go to France. Indeed, if the Recollet's own later declaration is to be believed, he had preached at Versailles and had come to Boston from the West Indies in D'Estaing's (read De Ternay's?) fleet.<sup>23</sup> If he had

<sup>20</sup> M. Montgolfier to Bishop of Quebec, Dec. 9, 1779, *Quebec Dioc. Arch.; Pub. Arch. Canada, Haldimand Papers*, B 182, 129, 185-1, 113, 132, 111, 135. Frère Juniper (Pierre Berthiaume) was born at Charlebourg, Quebec, in 1744, and had gone to France for his education. There he joined the Recollets of the Province of St. Denis on August 8, 1768, as a lay brother. He returned to Canada before the outbreak of the American Revolution. (Information from Father Jouvé, O.F.M., through courtesy of Mr. H. Biggar, of the Canadian Archives, Jan. 3, 1934; and from Father Hugolin Lemay, O.F.M., Sept. 18, 1937.) For three years before he left Canada in 1779—that is, from shortly after the beginning of the American Revolution—he had sought permission to return to France to continue his studies, but had been refused (*Haldimand Papers*, B 135).

<sup>21</sup> Gen. Schuyler to Gen. Washington, Dec. 12, 1779, *Washington Papers* (Library of Congress).

<sup>22</sup> Gen. Washington to Gen. Schuyler, Dec. 25, 1779, *Sparks Mss.* (Harvard Univ. Library), 65, vol. 2, p. 157.

<sup>23</sup> Rev. Daniel Little, *Journal*, p. 81 (*Archives of the First Congregational Parish* (Unitarian), of Kennebunk, Maine, kindness of Mr. Harold H. Bourne, Clerk.

been to France, he could have left there on June 25, 1780, as certain French officers did who, on September 30, 1780, arrived at Newport by way of Santo Domingo. At any rate, before the end of October, he received the recommendation of the French Consul to serve the Penobscots who had gone to the French to ask for a priest, and who returned well satisfied with their visit.

Father Berthiaume's presence was both a great joy and an advantage to the Penobscots. He was no burden to them for support because he mostly supported himself. Besides that, he successfully begged food for them during the hard winter, and courageously resisted the truckmaster in his unjust treatment of them. He made a specific complaint to the Legislature that the truckmaster sold to the Indians at enormous prices what the Government intended as presents to them, and that he exploited them in trade by paying hardly anything for furs, and even then cheated in weight and measure. These evil practices, the priest declared, were driving the Indians to trade and possibly to friendship with the British at Penobscot.<sup>24</sup>

The truckmaster's reprisals were, at first, able to effect a sudden dismissal of Father Berthiaume from the State's service. But the Government's action, taken shortly after June, 1782, aroused a veritable storm of protest among the Indians. They got several prominent men of the district to oppose it, and sent a delegation under Chief Orono to protest it. The incident, which was quite hot while it lasted, resulted, not only in the reinstatement of the priest and the discharge of the truckmaster, but also in a wealth of testimonies in the priest's favor.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the most prominent citizens of Hallowell certified that they knew Juniper Barthiume (*sic*), Recollet, since his residence among the Eastern Indians. They were firmly persuaded of his friendly attachment to the American cause, and of the essential service he had rendered to the public by his constant, earnest, and effectual endeavors to cultivate a friendly intercourse between the Indians and the inhabitants of that

<sup>24</sup> Nov. 20, 1781, *Mass. Arch.*, 236:34; *Baxter Mss.*, XIV, 372; see also *Mass. Arch.*, 236:33, March 8, 1782, and *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1781-1782*, p. 938.

<sup>25</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XX, 68-71.



part of the country. They, too, gave it as their opinion that his further continuance as instructor among the Indians would probably be attended with happy and important consequences to the public.<sup>26</sup> He was, therefore, reinstated by the Government. During the first two years of his incumbency the missionary had resided at Fort Halifax, but from this time on he lived in a house of his own at White Island, one of the Indians' possessions in the lower Penobscot.<sup>27</sup>

The war rapidly approaching its end, Father Berthiaume was formally discharged from the service in June, 1783. Nevertheless, he continued to serve the Penobscots on his own account and remained with them for some years.<sup>28</sup> During these later years, as before, he tried to protect them in their rights to both their land and their religion. For the matter of land arose as soon as the war was over, although it was not actually discussed with the Indians until 1786.<sup>29</sup>

About the same time, and also under Government auspices, a new attempt was made by non-Catholics in New England to anglicize the Catholic Indians of Maine. In 1786 Richard Carey, of Charlestown, "having possession of a legacy . . . primarily designed for the instruction of the Indian," asked the Rev. Daniel Little to go to the East to visit them "to try their lust for religious instruction, and their disposition to have their children taught the English language and [the English] manners." Mr. Little undertook the mission, not only by Carey's request, but also under the patronage of Governor Bowdoin. He himself considered it a "noble design."<sup>30</sup>

He had visited Indian Island in 1785 and left a description of his visit. In 1786, when Mr. Little went to those Indians on

<sup>26</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 144:500; *Baxter Mss.*, XX, 71; see also the Memorials of Horno (Orono) and of Father Berthiaume himself and the Court's Resolve in *Baxter Mss.*, XX, 81, 82, and *Mass. Acts and Resolves*, Nov. 6, 1782, p. 298.

<sup>27</sup> Rev. Daniel Little, *Journal*, p. 81.

<sup>28</sup> *Baxter Mss.*, XX, 46, 47, 232, 233, 385; John M. Lenhart, in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XXIII (1937-1938), 461-466.

<sup>29</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1786-1788*, chap. 90, pp. 315-317.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 1784-1785, chap. 57, pp. 233, 246, 247, and chap. 168, pp. 414-415. Rev. Daniel Little to Samuel Philips, Jr., Feb. 18, 1788; memo of his trip in 1785 in unprinted *Belknap Papers* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

his new mission as evangelist, he met Orono, the chief, and others at John Lee's at Majorbaggeduce on the Penobscot (August 14th). The minister "proposed to them the general object of his mission, and they engaged to bring all the Indians in by ten days, and were pleased to know that the Commissioners were coming to arrange with them about their lands."

On the 18th, Mr. Little was at Colonel Brewer's at Canduskeag. There he learned "of the arrival of the Indian Priest from New York, and immediately from Kennebeck." He also heard that "the priest had gone from Kennebeck to New York and bought a small sloop, in which he had gone up to Canduskeag the day before, and that he had anchored his sloop in the bay near Colonel Treet's." Mr. Little went up to Treet's and

conversed freely with said priest. He appeared a man possessed of a good natural understanding, talked English somewhat broken, but so as I understood him pretty well. His dress was a blue coat with a velvet collar; [he was] white, tall and pretty well proportioned; his address truly French, except an Indian shrug and toss with his shoulders when he pronounced an emphatical no. [He] was well equipped with pocket instruments. He has no commander of his sloop but a white English lad. He told me he should go up to Indian Oldtown as soon as an Indian came down, and tarry with them till harvest of their Indian corn. I spent about an hour [with him]. What Mr. Ruthvan [copyist's error for Berthiaume], the name of the Indian Priest, has in view is mysterious. That he should come with such rapidity up the Bay and River, and not call at his own home at White Island, I cannot decipher.<sup>31</sup>

The priest's great eagerness about seeing the Indians should have been no mystery to Mr. Little. He showed an especial interest in the minister's school for Indians, and later the Indians refused to let their children attend it. The Indians also were brought only with great reluctance to agree with Massachusetts' proposals about the Indians' lands; and it was learned that Father Berthiaume played a decisive part in that matter. In this regard there is much significance in the fact that General

<sup>31</sup> Rev. Daniel Little, *Journal*, pp. 79 ff.

Lincoln, the Massachusetts Commissioner, added to his report a complaint about him. Colonel Neptune, of the tribe, it was said, had given the priest thirty-seven beaver skins to sell for him in Boston. But the priest returned without the money, saying that it had been taken from him in Boston to pay for some clothing which the Indian had received, although the Indian assumed that it was presented to him. Lincoln desired that the story should be investigated; and the Massachusetts Government kept this matter in mind, in the instructions given to later Indian Commissioners.<sup>32</sup>

During the whole of the year 1787,<sup>33</sup> the Indians gave no sign of ratifying the land agreement with the State, according to John Lee who wrote twice to the Governor on the matter. In one of these letters, he made an explicit statement of what probably had been known or suspected for some time past.

I have endeavoured to inform myself of the reason of the extraordinary conduct of the Tribe, and find that the Priest who has officiated for some years amongst them has great influence over them, which he has made use of, to obstruct the operation of the Solemn Agreement made by their Chiefs and other leading men of the Tribe with the Commissioners, by engaging a majority of their Young Men to disapprove of the Treaty. After repeated intimations to this purpose from such people as are the most conversant with the Tribe, I took an opportunity of conversing with this Priest upon the subject; his answer to my inquiries were such, as confirmed me that the information received was not without foundation, and that he was the principal, if not the sole cause of the Indians declining Executing the Deed required.<sup>34</sup>

In consequence of all this, the Governor, in addressing the General Court on March 7, 1788, made reference to the Penobscot situation,<sup>35</sup> and on May 29th, he informed the two houses

<sup>32</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 435:3; *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1786-1787*, VI, 938-940.

<sup>33</sup> *Acts and Resolves, 1786-1787*, pp. 366 and 953; *Mass. Arch.*, *House Docs.* 104, Nov. 6, 1786.

<sup>34</sup> John Lee to Governor Hancock, Dec. 28, 1787 (*Mass. Arch.*, p. 92). He had also written on Feb. 8, 1787.

<sup>35</sup> In Council Chamber read and Committee appointed, to which the House added its members, March 15 (*General Court Records*, March 15, 1788, p. 124).

that he had appointed the Rev. Daniel Little to carry out the conference with the Penobscots.<sup>36</sup>

The investigation of the charge against the priest still occupied the legislators' attention and was included in the instructions which they made out for Mr. Little.<sup>37</sup> The Commissioners set out from Colburn's early on Saturday, June 21st. Mr. Little described their arrival opposite Indian Island, their being transported to the island by sprightly young men in canoes, their landing on a shore lined with women and children, their march up the smooth, wide road to the capital house, their introduction into the large assembly room, half of which was for their exclusive use. He also noted carefully the ceremonial of the meeting, with the Sachems and the old men present, each according to rank, and the honor given to a former Sachem, now a hundred years of age. But the Indians would have nothing to do with ratifying the treaty nor with Mr. Little's religion, although they were threatened with Government action about the former and assured of freedom as regards the latter.

The conference began between eight and nine o'clock and lasted about four hours. During the entire time there was good temper and good order.

Not a drop of rum drunk by us or them while in the town. . . . Not a word spoke or smile expressed by any of them, except their moderator or orator, and a few directing words by the Council to assist their speaker. In the midst of the conference, at twelve o'clock, the bell rung, and they made a composed mental prayer for about ten minutes, when they appealed to Heaven, as given them a secure right to the soil [*sic*]. All the Sachems rose up from the ground on which they sat and stood in a posture for a minute expressive of an appeal to the Great God of the truth of their declarations. Four men were distinguished as their acting chiefs, viz: Orono, Orsong, Esq., Neptune Bowot [Bosson?], Orsong Neptune. No women or children seen or heard through conference. They declined

<sup>36</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1786-1787*, March 28, 1788, chap. 92, pp. 873-875; *ibid.*, 1788-1789, chap. 1, p. 729. The Governor had appointed Mr. Little, May 2 (*Mass. Council Records*, p. 337).

<sup>37</sup> *Mass. Council Records*, May 31, 1788, p. 350.



giving us liberty to see the tribe paraded or numbered, but those who were most acquainted with the tribe judged, as they appeared on the shore at our landing, to be present about 200.<sup>38</sup>

Mr. Little was very careful about the accusation against their priest. He did not bring it up in open council, but only privately to Orono. The latter told him that the dispute was all settled. "But is there no fault in your Priest?" the minister questioned. "Little faults," Orono answered, "like your priests and all priests."<sup>39</sup>

On the Quebec side, the non-priestly character of the Recollet missionary had been insisted upon from the beginning, and during all the years of his stay among the Maine Indians.<sup>40</sup> The mystery element in Father Juniper Berthiaume's story is not solved. Whether he was really just a lay brother who feigned being a priest, or whether he actually became ordained, cannot be decided from the documents now available. There is always the ten-months gap in the documents from January to October, 1780. What seems certain is that he had an antipathy to English rule and a genuine sympathy with the cause of the States; and that he showed a real and sincere devotion to the religious interest of the Catholic Indians in our territory, who would otherwise have been deprived of religious guidance during those critical times.<sup>41</sup> No reference to his later life or his death has been found. His story as narrated here rests only on the documents. If he was an impostor, he acted his part well.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Rev. Daniel Little, *Journal*, p. 167.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168, June 22, 1788; Little to Hancock, June 23 and 25, 1788 (*Mass. Arch.*). The supposed theft of which Father Berthiaume was accused appears in a form, much exaggerated probably by rumor, in Bishop Plessis' *Visites Pastorales*, ed. Tetu (Quebec, 1903), pp. 136-137.

<sup>40</sup> *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*, III, cited in Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada après la Conquête*, 2<sup>me</sup> partie (Quebec, 1917), p. 161; see also *Quebec Dioc. Arch. Reg. de lettres*, I, 6, July 16, 1784, and Oct. 6, 1788.

<sup>41</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites*, 137.

<sup>42</sup> J. Lenhart, "Two Revolutionary Chaplains in Government Employ," in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, XXIII (1937-1938), 446-466.

## III

Besides furnishing priests for the Catholic Indians of Maine, the French exercised an important influence in softening the traditional New England hostility toward things Catholic.

From 1780 to the end of 1782, first Newport and then Boston had a chance to see and to know the French sailors and their officers, among whom were the Catholic chaplains. Americans in both these towns had daily contact with them, and with the French civilian officials and merchants who were inevitable accompaniments of the military and naval forces and who formed a definite French colony in both places.

The French squadron of De Ternay and Barras was at Newport from July, 1780, to August, 1781. Each ship had its chaplain. Among them, besides Father Frédéric de Bourges, were some deserving of special notice here. One of the chaplains assigned to the *Neptune* was the Abbé La Poterie, perhaps identical with the founder of the Church in Boston. On the *Neptune* also were two other priests, named Jean Wanton and François Hobdai, respectively, each described as "*prêtre Américain*." (This may mean that they were born in Canada.) On the *Jason* there were also two Irish priests, the Abbé Dowd and Father Maurice; the former of whom was listed as "*Irlandais*," and the latter, better known by his family name, Rev. Charles Whelan. (After the war he served the Catholics of New York.) One of the chaplains on the *Amazone* was Father "Machung" (undoubtedly McKeon in our way of spelling). At the hospital which the French established some "twenty leagues from Providence," the chaplain was the Abbé Glesnon (perhaps Glenon).

These chaplains likewise officiated at extraordinary religious services. On December 16, 1780, for example, Newport witnessed the Catholic military funeral of the French admiral De Ternay.

The long procession presented the most inspiring funeral scene ever witnessed in [that] town. The coffin was preceded by twelve priests, and as the funeral was at twilight, with light-

ed torches in their hands. Around the grave, they chanted the Roman Catholic service and performed all the customary rites of the Catholic Church with a genuine feeling of sadness, naturally awakened by the ability and virtues of the distinguished dead. The body was buried in Trinity churchyard.<sup>43</sup>

During the next two years Newport got well acquainted with the French,<sup>44</sup> and it is to be noted that in the beginning of the year 1783, Rhode Island, undoubtedly influenced by the French sojourn, blotted from her statute books a law against Catholics.<sup>45</sup>

Boston likewise experienced a second intimate contact with the French. It was the seat of the French Consul and his staff, and also the residence of those French merchants who assisted in victualing and otherwise caring for the fleet and for French commercial interests. It also saw some of the fleet. Indeed, from the summer of 1780, when the fleet arrived, until its final departure in late December, 1782, there were always some French ships in the harbor.

Among the priests who were certainly in Boston at this time were the unknown chaplains of *La Surveillante*, *L'Hermione*, *La Gentille*, *L'Astrée*, *L'Ariel*, *La Résolue*, and *La Magicienne*, as well as Rev. John Machung (McKeon) (on *L'Amazone*), and Rev. Célestin Bureau (on *La Concorde*).

There were also chaplains in the French army under Rochambeau which came with the fleet to America. Newport could have become acquainted with them, but none of those army chaplains is known to have been in Boston, except the Abbé Robin, who arrived on May 6, 1781. He had letters of recommendation from Benjamin Franklin to Jonathan Williams of this town, and received, therefore, a courteous welcome here.

During that period Mass was celebrated aboard ships by the several chaplains. The French Catholics of Boston could have attended, and many of them probably did so. It is cer-

<sup>43</sup> Edward M. Stone, *Our French Allies* (Providence, 1884), pp. 338, 347, 351, quoting a source that depended on an eye-witness.

<sup>44</sup> In July, 1940, there was a Rochambeau celebration in Newport.

<sup>45</sup> Feb., 1783, *Rhode Island Col. Records*, IX, 674-675.

tain that some non-Catholics did so attend, out of both curiosity and courtesy.<sup>46</sup> During the same period divine service was also performed by some of the French priests in the places that served as hospitals for their soldiers and sailors. Two of these are known. One of them was at the barracks on Governor's Island.<sup>47</sup> The other was a hospital in the West End of Boston. It had been put at the service of the French by both the State and the town in October, 1781.<sup>48</sup> In this building, therefore, in 1781, Mass was celebrated by whatever priests acted as hospital chaplains for the French Navy. It is probable that one of the chaplains was the Rev. Father Lacy, an Irish priest who is said to have been in Boston.<sup>49</sup>

As these religious services were undoubtedly available to the other French people who lived in Boston, it is probable that the chapel of that hospital was the first regular religious meeting-place for the Catholics of Boston.

Whether the French chaplains during their stay here said Mass in any other place is not known. In any case, they really began the history of regular Catholic services in Massachusetts and afforded non-Catholics an opportunity of witnessing these services with their own eyes.

Not only the officials of our Government, but also the public, were deeply conscious of the debt owed to the French for their aid and manifested their sense of obligation in diverse fashions. The people, for example, were very lenient in dealing with some guilty French sailors when an American was killed on the occasion of a certain tavern brawl in December, 1780. When the grand jury indicted seven of the French, several Americans busied themselves to see that a favorable sentence would be handed down at the trial. Some Bostonians wrote to the French Admiral that they thought a verdict of "not guilty" would be handed down. One prominent person-

<sup>46</sup> *Belknap Papers*, 6 Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc., IV, 224.

<sup>47</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1780-1781*, pp. 613-614, 745; *Report, Record Commission*, XXV, 158-159.

<sup>48</sup> *Mass. Arch.*, 78:684-687, and 187:252-253, Resolve authorizing purchase of land in West End for erection of a hospital.

<sup>49</sup> *Journal of Claude Blanchard* (Albany, 1876), pp. 165, 184.



age in Philadelphia, even went to the Minister personally and offered to use his influence in favor of the indicted Frenchmen. La Luzerne, however, thought it more prudent to refuse this and depend on public sentiment. The jury freed one of the accused and handed down a verdict of manslaughter for the six others, who received a very light sentence.<sup>50</sup>

The Alliance was also cemented in the intimate way of international marriages. This method was fostered by Governor Hancock himself, who sought among the French officials here "a good husband" for the daughter of one of his Boston friends. He was successful, too, for on May 22, 1781, the French Consul then at Boston, Joseph de Valnais, after paying his court to Miss Eunice Quincy, filed intentions to marry her.<sup>51</sup>

Many other French-American marriages, running to an average of seven yearly, took place from 1777 onward. Among them was the marriage of Lewis Baury de Bellerive and Mrs. Mary Clarke, of Middletown, Connecticut, in Boston, on June 7, 1784, by Rev. Samuel Stillman. Mr. Baury was probably the richest member of the French post-war colony and one of those most interested in starting a Catholic church here. The date of his arrival in Boston is not known, but it may well have been before December 24, 1782.<sup>52</sup>

In connection with Baury de Bellerive, mention must also be made of a certain Mrs. Marie Margaret Price. She was probably the wife of that James Price who, in 1778, was one of the

<sup>50</sup> La Luzerne to Vergennes, *Etats Unis*, vol. 15, fol. 32; vol. 16, fol. 2.

<sup>51</sup> *New England Hist.-Gen. Soc., mss.; Boston Marriages*, p. 448. Mrs. Valnais became a Catholic and brought up her only daughter, Callista, as a Catholic. In 1783 the family went to France.

<sup>52</sup> Lewis Baury de Bellerive was born at Fort Dauphin, Parish of St. Joseph's, Santo Domingo, Sept. 16, 1753. He came of a family which owned and cultivated extensive plantations there. He was sent to France for a military education and, at the time of the American Revolution, he joined the French fleet under D'Estaing. He served throughout the American Revolution, during which he, at one time, held the rank of Captain of Grenadiers. After the war he became a citizen of Boston. The first known mention of his being in Boston is his marriage record, dated June 7, 1784. In 1787, when Shays' Rebellion broke out, he was appointed aide-de-camp to Major-General Lincoln, who later wrote to him, "the zeal and fortitude, the spirit and bravery, which marked every part of your conduct, merit my esteem and entitle you to my thanks." *New England Hist.-Gen. Reg.*, XX (1866), 174 ff.

provision agents for the French fleet. She, together with Mr. Baurý, was the prime mover in finally obtaining a priest for the Catholics here.

Commercial as well as social relations between the two races brought also a need of cultivating the French language, formerly considered "a Papist accomplishment." Governor Hancock and Samuel Breck, Sr., sponsored the resulting movement in Boston.<sup>53</sup> Mr. Breck even sent his son, Samuel, Jr., to a Catholic college in France, in order to learn the language. It was probably characteristic of the times, however, that the boy's "good maternal grandmother . . . refused to kiss [him good-bye] and reluctantly gave [him] her blessing, . . . because he was going to a popish country." Young Breck's becoming a Catholic in France afterwards brought about some interesting contacts which will be mentioned in their place.<sup>54</sup>

Meanwhile, from the very beginning of the period Bostonians showed the effect of contact with the French by giving a new and personal turn to some of their famous anti-Catholic prejudices, and conceding, at least, the good faith of some Catholics in their religious views. It was admitted by one preacher that Transubstantiation, which Boston Protestants thought erroneous, was "believed by men of great abilities and knowledge in the Romish church." Even the less educated Catholics were given the benefit of good faith. This was itself a marked change for a Dudleian Lecture, and plainly indicated the ordinary Boston trend, which the lecturer, however, did not wish to see overdone.

While we are politically allied to Popish powers, [he argued], and admit the right of all to judge for themselves in matters of religion and to follow the dictates of their own consciences, they conducting as good members of civil society, let us not through a false complaisance decline opposing the erroneous tenets of Popery and become indifferent to Protestant truths.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Recollections of Samuel Breck (Junior)* (Philadelphia, 1877), pp. 46-47; cf. *Report, Record Commission*, XXV, 163, 229, 259; and *ibid.*, XXVII, 28, 33.

<sup>54</sup> *Recollections of Samuel Breck*, p. 77.

<sup>55</sup> Rev. William Gordon, Dudleian Lecture of Sept. 5, 1781, on "The Doctrine of Transubstantiation" (ms. in *Harvard Univ. Library*, 5340:81—toward the end).

On August 9, 1782, a squadron of De Grasse's fleet came to Boston and remained until December 24th, when it transported the French soldiers from the United States to the West Indies. Bostonians generally sought to show every mark of respect to their allies, particularly because of their recent victories over the British. Despite some underlying sentiment of dislike and a number of petty quarrels, the French commander, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, and his men were generally praised and respected in Boston and given every external sign of esteem and gratitude.<sup>56</sup>

Even before the arrival of the soldiers, there had been a most remarkable expression of official Boston's conciliatory and courteous attitude to the French. An ensign named the Chevalier de la Pine, who was attached to the French frigate *L'Amazone*, having died during the fleet's sojourn here, was "honorably interred" on November 1st. The funeral procession

began with a company of marines, their arms secured and muffled drums. A priest bearing a silver crucifix. Immediately after, *THE BODY*, carried in a sling by four marines, and the pall supported by six officers, each with a lighted taper. Two priests; one of them in his white robes reading the burial service and both with tapers burning. Then followed his Excellency, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honorable Council, the Reverend Clergy, the Selectmen, and many of the most respectable Gentlemen of the town, accompanied by the field and other officers of the Boston regiment in their uniforms. The whole escorted by a number of French officers.

Upon reaching the burying grounds, the body was deposited under the Church and the marines discharged three vollies. The ceremony was very solemn and exhibited a new proof of the cordiality, sympathy and friendship that subsist between the citizens and subjects of the allied nations of France and America.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *Etats Unis*, vol. 23, fol. 26; *Report, Record Commission*, XXVI, 275 ff.

<sup>57</sup> *Massachusetts Spy*, Nov. 14, 1782, according to dispatch, dated Boston, Nov. 7, 1782.

The incident, naturally, aroused adverse comment on the part of the Tories. From the beginning of the French Alliance, the American partisans of England had secretly employed the fundamental religious dislike between New England Dissenter and French Catholic as a means "to spread the notion that it is far better to make an accommodation with the Mother Country than to become dependent on the house of Bourbon."<sup>58</sup> They reacted in a similar fashion to the incident of the Catholic funeral. On December 1, 1782, the Loyalist Rivington's *Royal Gazette* of New York carried the comment:

What a noise was made but a few years ago about Popery being tolerated in Canada by the British Government; would any one then have believed that ever the Clergy and Select Men of Boston, would parade through the streets after a Crucifix, and join a procession in praying for a departed soul out of purgatory, as it seems they did on the 4th [*sic*] of November last.<sup>59</sup>

When the French troops arrived in December, there was evidently more Tory propaganda. This gave occasion for the counter-attack made in a Boston newspaper (*Massachusetts Spy*) on December 12, 1782, against "the infamous falsehoods and misrepresentations usually imposed on the world by perfidious Britons, who have often led us to entertain an unfavorable opinion of the French troops. The quiet, peaceable, and orderly behaviour of the troops during their long march and their stay in Boston" was the well-chosen ground for a refutation of the Tory whisperings.<sup>60</sup>

The anti-French side of Boston opinion was depicted by Dr. Cooper himself, at first hand.

There is a party among us [he wrote] disposed to avail themselves of every incident, and of all personal resentments, to weaken and divide our public counsels and injure the alliance.<sup>61</sup> . . . As for myself, I remain, I speak and I act always in

<sup>58</sup> *Memo*, 1781, *Etats Unis*, vol. 20, fol. 470.

<sup>59</sup> Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, Dec. 11, 1782 (*New York Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>60</sup> Drake, *Old Landmarks of Boston* (Boston, 1881), p. 434.

<sup>61</sup> *Franklin's Works* (Fed. ed., New York, 1904), X, 169 (May 5, 1783).



accord with my former principles, that our independence is sustained and assured only by the friendship of France, and that those who take the most direct and efficacious means to cultivate that friendship are my best friends, because they are the best friends of my country.<sup>62</sup>

#### IV

The departure of the French forces from Boston at the end of 1782 naturally occasioned a decrease in French influence here. However, some of the French officers and soldiers refused to return to France with the main body; they preferred to reside permanently in America. A considerable number, it is said, remained in Providence and Newport. Some eighteen of these later joined the Newport Lodge of Masons in October, 1790.<sup>63</sup>

A lesser number appear to have remained in Boston. The French Consulate with its staff was, of course, continued here. Some French merchants also from the West Indies remained (came?) to aid in and profit by the expected increase in Franco-American trade. Comparatively speaking, they constituted but a handful of the population. Some of them, for example, Mr. Baur de Bellerive and Mrs. Price, were fervent Catholics, and must have looked forward to the establishment of a Catholic priest to supply their religious needs. Their expectations were disappointed.

A certain French priest did, in fact, visit the city after the fleet departed. He was a Franciscan, Rev. Jean Baptiste Causse, known in religion as Father Fidentianus. He had previously been in Philadelphia for an unknown space of time (his first appearance there was in 1782) and had on different occasions helped out the Jesuit parish clergy of that city. He was described by Father Farmer, their superior, as a man of sufficient learning, who spoke both French and English, who had won friends by his decent and unblamable behavior, and who had

<sup>62</sup> *Etats Unis*, vol. 24, fol. 165.

<sup>63</sup> E. M. Stone, *Our French Allies* (Providence, 1884), p. 529.

acted as a parish priest in Germany (*sic*) for six years before he came to America.<sup>64</sup>

According to his own story, this priest was induced to go to Boston by promises that were made to him, but when he arrived here, in the fall or winter of 1783, he found conditions altogether different from what he had been led to believe. Considering himself to have been "deluded by false promises," he left Boston, intending to go to Quebec, but suffered shipwreck in Nova Scotia, and was obliged to winter there. He later returned to Philadelphia, where, after a long *détour* and experiences of all sorts of hardships and dangers, he arrived on August 5, 1785.<sup>65</sup>

The disappointment of Father Causse and the undoubted regret of the French Catholics in Boston at his refusal to stay with them were due, in great part, to the French Government's foreign policy. This was directly opposed to any increase of French residents in America, and also to granting them aid for a church. Even before the end of the war, La Luzerne, the French Minister, had stated that official France had no desire to see any French emigration to this country. In February, 1783, he warned his Government that it would soon have to face that problem. The toleration characteristic of the American form of government would, he believed, "appeal to all the French Protestants, and after some of them come here, it is not to be doubted that their invitation and the just and true picture which they will draw of their situation here, will attract a great number of them."<sup>66</sup>

Dominated by a similar care for French royal interests, the French diplomatic corps in this country were averse to aiding the establishment of Catholic churches here. In early 1786 the French *Chargé d'Affaires* in New York stated that the existence of a French (Catholic) church here "would be one reason more

<sup>64</sup> Father Farmer to Bishop Carroll (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 3 P 11), Aug. 7, 1785; Shea, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 264, 294.

<sup>65</sup> Shea, *History*, II, 264, 294; *Religious Cabinet* (Baltimore, 1842), I, 313; *Records Am. Cath. Hist. Soc.*, III (1888-1891), 143; IV (1895), 39; *U.S. Cath. Hist. Mag.*, I (1887), 215; and IV (1891), 199.

<sup>66</sup> *Etats Unis*, vol. 23, fol. 53.

for the subjects of his Majesty [of France] to emigrate to this country." <sup>67</sup>

The same French official also professed to believe that French influence in America would be adversely affected by any aid to Catholic churches here. In this regard, he explicitly affirmed:

I am convinced that we could not do anything wiser than to take no part in what relates to religion in this country. The slightest appearance of interest in [the Catholic] religion would awaken the former prejudices which English writers inspired among the Americans. The story of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes is not yet effaced from their memory, and a large number of families of the refugees under Louis XIV, now resident in the various States, still deplore his inflexible rigor. From the beginning of the [American] revolution, the English never ceased in their political writings to repeat that France would attempt to spread the Catholic religion in the United States in order to aid their later subjugation. This reason and many others which I could give should prevent us from meddling in any way in the religious affairs of America.

Howsoever large the toleration, legally assured in the several States, religious feeling is aroused as soon as one sect dares to lord it over another. . . .

The number of Catholics [in America] has hitherto been too small to give offense, but the ordinary opinion, as in England, holds that Catholicity is contradictory to political liberty, and if it grows by the help of any foreign power, there will be lively opposition to its increase.<sup>68</sup>

On March 27, 1785, M. Marbois, the French *Chargé d'Affaires*, estimated the number of Catholics in New England as about six hundred. In so doing, he may well have had in mind the two tribes of Catholic Indians in Maine. It is, however, hardly conceivable, although still possible, that he omitted from this estimate the Catholic French scattered through the territory from New Haven to Machias.<sup>69</sup> In any case, they may be thought of as numbering between three hundred and six hundred. Whatever their number, it is certain that in the sum-

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 31, fol. 7.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, fols. 5-7.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 29, fol. 183, and fol. 123.

mer of 1785, the French Catholics in Boston constituted too small a community to think of building a church. On September 22, 1785, of that year, M. St. Jean de Crèvecoeur, then French Consul at New York, wrote to his Home Government anent the building of a (French) Catholic church in New York. In his letter he mentioned the existence of one in Philadelphia, but added, "I dare say that the French who live in Boston will not think of building one for several years, as they are the only Catholics in that city."<sup>70</sup>

The religious situation in Boston was, in fact, the occasion of the detailed exposition of French religious policy mentioned above, written by Otto, Crèvecoeur's successor in New York. He had just learned of the activities here of a French priest, named Rev. Huet de la Valinière, a Sulpician, formerly of Montreal. This priest had been banished from Canada to France because of pro-American sentiments during the war. After its close he returned to America by way of the West Indies, and in the spring of 1785 landed at Newburyport, Massachusetts. What he did there, how long he stayed, or where else he went in New England, is not known, but by the beginning of the next year he was in New York. There he visited the French Consulate to talk about plans for spreading Catholicity in the United States. He met Otto, and impressed the French diplomat as "a very honest man but too zealous for this country." The priest told Otto that he had proposed to the Bishop of Autun in France to send missionaries here and establish seminaries in the chief cities of this country. He, therefore, desired the Consul's help in obtaining a royal grant to finance this enterprise. The French official, who was himself a non-Catholic, was opposed to the idea, not so much for personal reasons as through policy. He told the priest that however eager the King of France might be to spread the Catholic faith, it did not enter into His Majesty's plans to take any step that could possibly offend the United States. Whereupon the priest asserted that the Americans themselves seemed to him well disposed to

<sup>70</sup> Crèvecoeur to Minister of Marine, *Arch. Nat. Aff. Etrang.*, B 1, 909, fols. 73-74.



Catholicity and even ready to enter the Church; and that he had found a very marked leaning toward Catholicism among the Presbyterians of New England.

"This extraordinary assertion," Otto wrote in his report, "made me certain on the spot that Father de la Valinière was being carried away by his zeal, and that little, if any, financial support should be given to his projects."

Then the French official set forth his own notion about the French religious policy. Given this information, one is permitted to believe that Father de la Valinière, during his visit here in 1785, had planned to open a Catholic church in Boston, but recognized the necessity of help from the French Government.

In 1786, the French Consul reported the French citizens residing there as consisting of

Beaury de Bellerive, a planter from San Domingo; Cormerais de L'horme, first deputy of the consulate and merchant; Caillau Durivage, second deputy and merchant; Jean Jutau, interpreter; Jaques Nebon, André Carente, — Morel, (Jean?) Duballet, Jean Dumora, Jean Baptiste Massé, — Véron, merchants; Caillau Durivage, jr., facteur; Pierre St. Médard, — Ravaut, and — Bru, distillers; Masson and Garraux, bakers; and Frédéric de Bissy, chancellor of the consulate.<sup>71</sup>

In the same Consul's report for 1787 he noted a substantial decrease. "There are now but two [mercantile] establishments. The second deputy [Durivage] has left Boston for the countryside. M. Dumora died at sea; Messrs. St. Médard, Caillau, Massé, and Morel have gone to the West Indies."

French influence in Boston was clearly on the decline. Nevertheless, those who remained still hoped for a priest; in fact, through their efforts the first resident priest was obtained.

## V

In the generation before 1788, a striking increase in the number of Irish persons in Boston and Massachusetts took

<sup>71</sup> *Aff. Etrang., Corr. cons. de Boston*, Feb. 13, 1787.

place. With the years after 1760, South Irish names appear much more frequently in newspapers, selectmen's minutes, passenger lists, marriage records, and official documents generally. In many instances the place of origin is also indicated, so that a solid base is available for the conclusion that this new Irish movement came mostly from Newfoundland and Halifax and partly from towns on the northern Massachusetts (Maine) coast. But in a goodly number of instances Ireland itself was the direct place of origin.

In Boston these South Irish folk are found holding the humbler posts in the town's life; they were porters as formerly, laborers generally, fishermen frequently, temporary guards during a smallpox epidemic, and too often inmates during the winter months of the town almshouse. It is especially noticeable that they resided in certain well-known boarding-houses, operated by persons of their own race, not unlike those of the succeeding generations.

It has been estimated that out of a total population in Boston of 15,520 in the year 1770, there were 1368 Irish. They thus constituted one out of every twelve inhabitants in the town.<sup>72</sup>

Although hardly prepared to agree with the statement that there were "approximately three thousand men bearing Irish names, enrolled with the New England forces in the Revolution,"<sup>73</sup> nevertheless, one cannot escape the conviction that the ratio of soldiers among the Irish persons of all New England was very high.

According to what Crèvecoeur wrote in 1785, the French in Boston believed themselves the only Catholics in the city. They had no notion of being literally surrounded by hundreds of Irish folk who were also Catholics. In February, 1783, M. La Luzerne, the French Minister, while warning his own Government about immigration, reported that there were

crowds of emigrants constantly arriving in the United States from Ireland, Scotland, and the Antilles. Many English people

<sup>72</sup> G. Donovan, *Pre-Revolutionary Irish in Massachusetts* (St. Louis, 1931), p. 52.

<sup>73</sup> Michael J. O'Brien, *Pioneer Irish in New England* (New York, 1937), pp. 277 ff.

also plan to come over here after the war. I am convinced that emigration will be one of the major injuries which independence will give to England.

As representative of French interests, he had to face the probability that these new immigrants from British lands would occasion a large commercial activity with the former mother country, and he even strove to excite the vigilance of Congress about their admission. Partly as a result of this, laws were passed in America refusing these immigrants admission to the public assemblies, corporations and tribunals, and even providing for their deportation. This last enactment was, however, not enforced because of the immigrants' economic value.

In describing the attraction of America to the immigrants from English lands, La Luzerne described the American form of government as "free and fitted to make the citizens happy," and offering "liberty of conscience."<sup>74</sup>

These new Irish immigrants differed from their predecessors in seeking religious as well as economic and political freedom. Furthermore, they took a place in American life comparatively more important because of the departure from this country of those former residents who sympathized with the English Crown and the Established Church. The American Patriots saw no irony of fate in the exile from their own land to Nova Scotia of their former fellow citizens, but an outsider did.

The preliminaries for the evacuation of the pro-English from the United States to Nova Scotia, made known in October, 1782, brought from the French Minister the shrewd comment:

The places in Acadie where [these people] will be settled . . . have not been inhabited since 1754, when the English deported the French residents, whom they suspected of violating their oath of neutrality, and whom the English dispersed all over this continent. Many of them perished. . . . An almost identical fate now compels the residents of the United States, who have betrayed their country, to be exiled from it and to go to a foreign land, even to the deserted habitations of those same Acadians.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Etats Unis*, vol. 23, fol. 253.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, fol. 102.

With the departure of the Loyalists, the Congregationalists formed a new aristocracy, and this change in social status gave opportunity for the old Irish residents to move up a step and for the immigrants to have room on the lowest steps of the ladder. From 1780 to 1788 the Boston marriage records contain Irish names literally by the scores, well over twenty-five Irish names annually. How many of them were old residents, how many were new, it is impossible to say. How many were Catholics is also unknown. However, the other town records give evidence that some Irish people had been residents of the town for many years, and some had already "emerged" from the larger group of Irish. Their names are not found among those of public officials, or of barristers and attorneys, or of physicians and surgeons. They were not even members of the fire-engine companies of the town.

Some few, however, appear as property-owners. Outstanding among them was Mrs. Mary Lobb, one of the oldest Boston Catholic residents. Her maiden name was Mary Connell. Born in 1734, the daughter probably of Patrick Connell, mariner and sea-captain, she married another sea-captain, James Smithwick by name, on August 20, 1763. After his death she married a certain George Lobb (March 14, 1779). She had three children, two boys by her first husband, and a girl by the second. The family were fairly well-to-do and owned property both in land and slaves.<sup>76</sup> When the Catholic congregation was formed here in 1788, Mrs. Lobb was one of its most active members.

Next to her in importance and length of residence was John Magner, born in 1734-1735, in Cappelquin in the County of Waterford, Ireland. When he came to America is not known, but he too was in Boston before the Revolution. In 1772 he was in business as a blacksmith.<sup>77</sup> The appearance of his name on a list of Boston Loyalists in 1778<sup>78</sup> indicates that he was already a person of some distinction. The reputation of Loyal-

<sup>76</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXX, 334, 339, 440; XXV, 20, 167, 178, 190.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIX, 325; *Arch. Supreme Judicial Court*, June 25, 1772.

<sup>78</sup> Windsor, *Memorial History of Boston*, III, 177.



ist was evidently false, because, even after the list was published, he undoubtedly remained in the town, and by August, 1780, was approved as a retailer at his shop near Oliver's Dock.<sup>79</sup> Magner was also a property-owner. From at least October 10, 1784, he owned a house in Lendall's Row (Lane), which in fact he occupied from then until his death in 1815.

Among the other Boston landowners with Irish names during the period in question, mention is also made of a certain Francis Mulligan (February 7, 1786). The latter advertised "a tenement to let in Fitch's Alley" in *The Independent Chronicle* of that date. He also owned some land near North Square.<sup>80</sup> The Mulligans also were in Boston before the Revolution. In 1783 a certain Daniel Haley had property in Black Horse Lane, alias Prince Street. This family resided in Boston at least as far back as 1760.<sup>81</sup>

Besides the few Irish folk who owned property, there were some who were lessees of property, such as Mr. Mullens (December 23, 1778); Joshua Farrington, Boston merchant (February 17, 1779); and Joseph Harrington of Weston (January 10, 1781). The lastnamed used his property for the practice of his trade as a cooper.

Among the more prominent Boston Irish of the period were the Duggan family. Although they do not appear as property-holders, one of them was a Boston merchant as early as 1773; he was a member of the firm of Cravath and Duggan, "Merchants or/and Shippers." In 1789 the firm's address was 28 Union Street. They were probably lemon dealers, for in the *Boston Directory* of 1796 both a Patrick and a John Duggan are so registered. Several of the name were members of the first Catholic congregation here. John, who from 1790 was especially prominent in it, was born in 1762. During the Revolution he held a military commission under General (Governor) Hancock, "and greatly prized a sword and sash which the latter presented to him. . . ." For a time he "was the propri-

<sup>79</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXV, 129.

<sup>80</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXVI, 240; XXVII, 48.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, XXVII, 225, and XXX, under the names of Haley and Gealey.

etor of the Hancock House and an enthusiastic admirer of that patriot whose portrait swung in a sign across Corn Court." <sup>82</sup>

Along with the Connells, the Magners, and Duggans, mention should also be made of the Connor family, one of whom (Charles) appears in the militia of 1776. Others included a bondsman, an owner of property, a constable, a licensed retailer, an auctioneer, and an innkeeper.<sup>83</sup>

Another of the early Irish Catholics in Boston was Patrick Campbell, smith and farrier. He, too, was in the town during the Revolution. On April 16, 1776, he married Mercy Gardner, in the Second Baptist Church,<sup>84</sup> but he remained a zealous enough Catholic to have his wife baptized a Catholic when the first priest came here and to become himself the first Irish warden of the new congregation.

The Mellony [*sic*] family had representatives in the Revolution. The father's name was Cornelius, and there was a Cornelius, Jr., who married a certain Lovie [*sic*] Farro at Christ Church on April 28, 1782. This Cornelius was destined to become a sexton in the Catholic church under Fathers Thayer and Matignon. The brother Michael had a license as chimney sweeper.

The Larkins also were old-time Bostonians. They had been here since at least 1757. A certain member of the family named John, was licensed (December 19, 1781) to sell tea, in partnership with Mr. Hurd. Elizabeth Larkin, probably his sister, born September 19, 1772, was a member of Father Thayer's congregation.

There were a few who had small businesses; one was a "chaise-maker," <sup>85</sup> another had a bookshop.<sup>86</sup> Some Irishmen are known to have been ticket-porters; others were auctioneers. The Irish were represented among the policemen by John Casey (November 29, 1780), Timothy Conner, and James Col-

<sup>82</sup> W. Leahy, "History of the Archdiocese of Boston," in *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (2 vols.: Boston, 1899), I, 26.

<sup>83</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXVI, under Charles, Patrick, John, Timothy, Edmund.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387. <sup>85</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, X, 191.

<sup>86</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, June 12, Dec. 1, 1783; May 25, 1786.

lins (November 3, 1784); among the school-teachers were Joseph Carroll (June 10, 1778) and Mrs. Flinn (1789).<sup>87</sup>

In trying to restore the place of the Irish in Boston life between 1780 and 1788, one may not omit the evidence drawn from poorhouse records. Marked always, of course, as "a stranger" or "in a suffering condition," but always "a poor person," some twenty-three persons with Irish names were received into the town's relief institution, probably the individual sufferers among a much larger number of immigrants.

Particularly striking in regard to this period of "emergence" is the comparatively large number of Irish licensed as retailers of spirits. From the single case of Michael Burns (August 6, 1777) and the three cases in 1778, the number increased to five in 1780, seven in 1781, and ten in 1782. In this last year a total of 108 licenses were granted. These Irish people would not have been "in the business" if there was not an increasing number of Irish customers, nor would they have been able to obtain licenses if they had been newcomers or altogether poor.

One of the old Irish residents whose name does not appear as property-owner or small business man was John Madden. He was in Boston as early as April, 1775, when he was twenty-seven years old. He was a member of Father Thayer's congregation, and until his own death in 1798, a faithful and active parishoner.

The Corbetts, Butlers, Callahans, Cavanaghs, Cottrills, Dohertys, Driscolls, Dowayers, Doyles, Fitzgeralds, Flinns, Hamiltons, Jacksons, Kennys, Longs, Lynches, O'Briens, O'Donnells, Reillys (Keillys), Ryans, Sullivans, Tobins, Torpys, Walshes, Wards, and Whites, all these Irish people were living in Boston in the 1780's. They were all Catholics and became members of the Catholic Church, when it was established here. Undoubtedly, from 1780, they, and many other Irish people, had been looking forward to the coming of a priest. Meantime, while they waited they had their marriages performed in Protestant churches, with a marked preference for the Episcopal.

<sup>87</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXV, 69, 254; *ibid.*, X, 211; and notes in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

This in itself constituted some occasion of losing the faith; and when there was added to it the fact of many mixed marriages, the wonder is, not that so few retained their religion when the priest came, but rather so many.

## VI

Probably the hopes of some of these Irish Catholics had been set upon the arrival in Boston of an English-speaking priest in the person of Rev. John Thayer.

Born May 15, 1758, in Boston, John Thayer was the fourth of eight children, all boys, the sons of Cornelius and Sarah (Plaisted) Thayer. His original American ancestor, Richard Thayer, came from England and settled in Braintree *ca.* 1640. Richard's seventh son, Nathaniel, settled in Boston *ca.* 1676. He was John Thayer's great-grandfather. The Boston Thayers were members of the First Church, and from at least 1728 some were active members. Both John's great-uncle Zechariah and his grandfather Cornelius were deacons of that church.<sup>88</sup> This pious grandfather of the first New England priest was a leather-dresser by trade and had sufficient means to leave twenty pounds to the poor at his death.<sup>89</sup>

John Thayer's father, Cornelius II, who succeeded the grandfather in the business of leather-dresser, was also an active member of the First Church.<sup>90</sup> It is probable that he brought up his children on the catechism which he inherited: it is certain that he had all of them baptized in the church shortly after their birth. To his fourth son he gave the name John, unique in the family history. To him, as to the others, he afforded the opportunity of a good education, probably in the

<sup>88</sup> Zechariah, active from 1728, ordained deacon May 23, 1731. Cornelius elected deacon in 1736, ordained Nov. 8, 1741 (*Records of the First Church, Boston*).

<sup>89</sup> Cornelius Thayer's will, dated May 21, 1743, and filed May 7, 1745, in *Registry of Probate*, no. 8255.

<sup>90</sup> *Papers of Administration* of the Estate of Cornelius Thayer II, *Registry of Probate*, no. 19565. He was called Thayer the Measurer, and was well known at Mr. Bentley's grandfather's mills (at Lancaster?). *The Diary of William Bentley* (4 vols.: Salem, 1905-1914), IV, 363.



hope of his turning to the ministry. Nevertheless, "in early youth" John, as he himself later confessed, "discovered no inclination for books. [His] father bound him as apprentice to a tailor."<sup>91</sup>

In 1774, when he was sixteen years of age, John had a change of heart. He determined to get an education, and arrangements were made for him to study in private with a good teacher (probably his pastor, Rev. Charles Chauncy), to prepare himself for entering college. By reason of his talents and application, he made rapid progress, and when he presented himself to the faculty of Yale College, about June, 1775, he was received into the freshman class, although the term was already three quarters over.

Thayer's course in college, thus irregularly begun, was also an interrupted one. He left Yale during his junior year, i.e., 1776-1777. It was a difficult time for the college;

the winter vacation was anticipated and prolonged on account of the difficulty of obtaining supplies for Commons; . . . during the last week of March [1777] College was . . . dispersed . . . the various classes were ordered to assemble at various inland towns . . . the . . . Juniors in Glastonbury with Professor Strong. . . . This dispersal continued . . . until late in June, 1778.<sup>92</sup>

After leaving college Thayer probably continued his studies in private, as before, with his pastor, particularly with a view to the ministry. On July 26, 1778, he was admitted a member of the First Church; and at the Yale Commencement of September 7, 1779, he was given an honorary degree of Bachelor of Arts.<sup>93</sup>

One thinks of him after receiving his degree as quite unsettled. He does not appear to have had 'a call' from any particular congregation. And there is reason to believe that he

<sup>91</sup> *An Account of the Conversion of The Rev. John Thayer* (cf. note 111); cf. also Noah Webster in *The American Magazine*, I (Sept., 1788), 738 ff.

<sup>92</sup> F. B. Dexter, *Yale Biographies and Annals for 1763-1778* (3rd series), pp. 641-642.

<sup>93</sup> *First Church Records*; F. B. Dexter, ed., *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* (3 vols.: New York, 1901), II, 369. The Commencement that year was held in private "because of the public calamities."

joined a militia company, organized at that time (October, 1779) to defend the harbor and stationed at Governor's Island. The unit at first had no provision for a chaplain, and when this rank was established in May, 1780, Thayer was its first occupant.<sup>94</sup>

Thayer held the chaplain's position until May 18, 1781, when he was 'discharged.' An opportunity had apparently presented itself to "acquire a greater consequence in his own country and thus become more useful to it." It involved a trip to Europe.<sup>95</sup>

There is some reason to believe that he hoped to become instructor in French and Government at Harvard. The town was experiencing a veritable craze for everything French, in particular for learning the French language; Harvard, which had officially taken this into account, had no professor of the subject at that moment.<sup>96</sup>

Whatever the motive, it was Thayer's determination, in his visit to Europe, to study foreign languages and government. Nevertheless, as a candidate for the ministry, and interested in the institutions of countries which were Catholic, his mind could not have been wholly free from a consciousness of the Catholic religion. Indeed, he had already taken notice of "the behaviour of the French Sailors and Soldiers (not always the most exemplary) at Boston," and judged it from the angle of their religion. They were the first Catholics, to his knowledge, that he had ever seen.<sup>97</sup> And his experience with them "made him begin to judge better of Catholics than he had been taught." He went abroad, then, with the definite recognition that he would come into intimate contact there with Catholicity. And in Europe, while he kept his primary purpose in mind, he was always Catholic-conscious.

When he became ill in Paris, his "first concern was to forbid that any Catholic priest should be suffered to come near [him]."

<sup>94</sup> *General Court Records*, vol. 40; *Mass. Arch.*, 227:448 (Oct. 6, 1779; May 3, 1780); *Mass. Muster and Pay Rolls*, XXV, 2.

<sup>95</sup> *Merritt, op. cit.*, p. 214.

<sup>96</sup> Thayer, *Account of the Conversion* (Manchester, Eng., n.d., prob. 1788), pp. 55, 56; *Harvard College Records*, III, 96, 150.

<sup>97</sup> See Thayer, *Account of the Conversion* (Swindell's ed.), pp. 56-58.

Contact with the French people, however, brought about a less "unfavourable idea" of Catholicity than he previously had. Meanwhile, in England, where he spent the last three months of 1782, he found himself not wholly in agreement with the doctrine of some English Protestant churches in which he preached. In Italy, which he visited next, his anti-Catholic prejudices decreased. The kindness of an Italian nobleman at a little place called Porto Ercole, the hospitable reception accorded him by the family with whom he lodged in Rome, and the general cordiality manifested to him by Italians, even when he avowed himself a Protestant, broke down much of his Puritan hostility to persons and things Catholic. In Rome his interest in religion drove him to seek an opportunity of conversing with some persons well informed in the Catholic religion. He was introduced to some Jesuits, among them Fathers Ambrogio and Zaccaria, and to an unnamed Augustinian friar. Some three months' study with them, and in the end a satisfying investigation of the miracles attributed to the cult of the recently deceased Venerable Benedict Joseph Labre, culminated in his public profession of the truth of the Catholic religion on May 23, 1783.<sup>98</sup> On this date, John Thayer was twenty-five years of age. Undoubtedly talented and intellectually honest, he was also quite immature and characterized by a certain aggressive egotism.

His conversion to the Catholic faith occasioned the entire laying aside of those "projects of ambition and settlement in the world" with which he had set out from America to Europe. But these were immediately replaced by a desire, frequently expressed during his succeeding four months in Rome, to be ordained a Catholic priest and go back from Europe to America as a fully authorized Catholic missionary to his New England compatriots. To prepare himself for the fulfillment of this new desire, he resided some three months in the English (Jesuit) College in Rome, studying the Catholic religion, and finally on September 21st, he presented a formal supplication to the Pope

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* Immediately afterwards he made a spiritual retreat of some days and on Sunday, June 1st, he made his First Communion.

to approve his project. He confidently believed that 'his being a native of America and already devoted to the ministry of preaching there and well understood by his own people would contribute very much to a successful result.'<sup>99</sup>

The Holy See did not, however, "feel itself able to console Thayer in his request," for he was both a neophyte and without means of support. Nevertheless, his case offered many interesting and important aspects. At that very moment negotiations were in progress between the Papal Nuncio at Paris and Franklin, the United States Minister there, about the organization of the Catholic Church in America. With the United States about to be solemnly recognized as an independent nation by the other nations, the Holy See looked forward to a new canonical status for the Catholics here, and hoped to erect for them a Church as independent as its being Catholic would permit. And this hope was finally fulfilled, although for a moment a different arrangement was in fair way of being approved.<sup>100</sup>

By September 27, 1783, the Holy See, while assured by Franklin of complete freedom for Catholic worship here, had received no official pronouncement on the matter from the American Government, nor had Rome yet come to any solution for the problem of the support and training of the clergy. Thayer, being advised of this situation, was not wholly deterred by it. "Still ardent for doing some good in Boston," and asserting that he was "well known to Mr. Franklin," he resolved to go to Paris and learn personally from him whether he would be free to return to Boston as a Catholic priest; as for support, he felt that it would be taken care of by the charity of those he would minister to in America, and that thus his ordination could be legally (canonically) conferred "on the title of the mission [which he would exercise there]."

Given the insistence of the zealous neophyte (and without doubt also the Holy See's own desire to have the Catholic religion officially represented in New England), the Congregation

<sup>99</sup> Sept. 21, 1783, *Arch. Prop. Fid. U.N.S.*, 21:375-376.

<sup>100</sup> Jules A. Baisné, *France and the Establishment of the American Catholic Hierarchy* (Baltimore, 1934); *Guilday Transcripts*, 22 and 23, Sept. 27, 1783.



ordered the Nuncio at Paris to examine the practicability of Thayer's project and, if Franklin agreed, to ordain Thayer *sub titulo missionis*, with a previous dispensation from irregularity (Thayer's father being a Protestant). The Congregation also gave Thayer a letter of introduction to the Nuncio.

The young American accordingly went to Paris, and on some date between October 23, 1783, and January 18, 1784, had an audience with the Nuncio. Before this he had probably seen Franklin and learned from him that there would be no objection on the part of the United States to his proceeding thither as a Catholic priest. Thus armed, he set forth his plan and hope to the Nuncio. The representative of the Holy See, still busily negotiating about American affairs and particularly about the training of the missionaries, concluded that Thayer's project was immature. The new convert, he felt, would be little likely to succeed in converting his countrymen to Catholicity "while he knew nothing yet of his new religion himself." He, therefore, advised Thayer not to proceed at once to America, but to settle in France and prepare himself more fully for the ecclesiastical state. In fine, the Nuncio refused to ordain him immediately; instead, he recommended him to the Archbishop of Paris for a place in some house of ecclesiastical studies.<sup>101</sup>

Nevertheless, Thayer at first decided to go to America even without the priestly character and to become a lay missionary among his friends there. For this purpose he wrote to Bishop Talbot in London asking books and other aid for such a mission; he also began putting into form, probably for similar use, an account of his own conversion, based upon his petition to the Holy See, and finally tried to stimulate some already ordained priests to accompany him to this country.<sup>102</sup>

Finally, however, he decided to follow the Nuncio's advice

<sup>101</sup> *Benjamin Franklin's Journal*, July 1, 1784 (*Franklin's Works*, 1888 ed.; VIII, 512-513). Franklin knew about Thayer's conversion already by Sept. 13, 1783 (*Belknap Papers*, III, 260).

<sup>102</sup> *Westminster Arch.*, *Talbot Papers*, vol. 42, Jan. 18, 1784; Father Plowden to Father Carroll, April 10, 1784, and Thayer to Dupinet, *Stonyhurst Coll. Arch.*, A II, 21 (37); F. Nagot, *Conversions Remarquables* (2d ed.: Paris, 1790), copy in Sulpician College, Washington, D.C.

and on October 18, 1784, entered the Sulpician Seminary, where he remained for three years. He was a marked man there, not only by reason of his extraordinary career, but also because of his extreme attachment to religious exercises, especially those of a penitential character. This he manifested even during vacation times, which he spent alone in divers pilgrimages, for example, to La Trappe.

Although it is probable that he wrote to some friends in Boston and that Franklin did not remain silent about him, little of the extraordinary story of the zealous convert became known in America until the middle of 1784. After that, Father Carroll heard about him from his English Jesuit correspondent, who had twice already mentioned Thayer in his letters. There was at first, not unnaturally, some suspicion about a converted minister,<sup>103</sup> and then some surprised appreciation of Thayer's real vision, apparent zeal, and undoubtedly high connections.<sup>104</sup> The impressed Father Carroll in turn inquired about Thayer from some Massachusetts members of Congress, who "knew him not"; and he even thought of writing to Thayer, who "might be useful at Rome."

In Boston some mention of Thayer and his purpose may have been made by those Congressmen; certainly, however, the news about him became somewhat public in the spring of 1785. At that time there arrived in Boston a letter from Mrs. Abigail Adams, which told of a visit paid to her and her husband at Auteuil by "Mr. Abbé Thayer": it spoke of his plan "to return to America *in a year or two*, to see if he could not convert his friends and acquaintances." It also described Thayer's argumentative and anti-Protestant kind of conversation, "upon which Mr. Adams took him up pretty short."<sup>105</sup>

In England, the Jesuit Father Plowden continued his interest in Thayer's career and sent constant information about him to Father Carroll. Together with this he plainly revealed what

<sup>103</sup> Father Plowden to Father Carroll, July 3, 1784 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 6 J 3).

<sup>104</sup> Sept. 2, 1784 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 6-4).

<sup>105</sup> *Fordham Jesuit Arch.*, 202 B 7; 202 B 8; *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A F 1; *Letters of Abigail Adams* (Boston, 1848), p. 228 (Jan. 18, 1785).

must be adjudged a nationalistic mistrust and suspicion. For example, he feared lest Thayer might possibly be put forward by the French as the bishop for America, and advised caution in dealing with him, partly because of the French influence and partly because of "a mixture of romantic devotion in [Thayer's] character." It is very interesting to note what Father Carroll replied to Father Plowden's ungracious insinuations.

As to the first, your apprehensions are unnecessary and totally groundless, and were you intimately acquainted with the nature of our government and the disposition of our people, you would not entertain them for a moment. If you adopt any of your ideas of America upon the credit of your newspapers, you recur to a very bad source. . . . Concerning Mr. Thyers [*sic*], I can only tell you that I have had much conversation with Mr. Franklin about him and I find the Dr. does not greatly esteem him. He believes him sincere but does not think him wise.<sup>106</sup>

Toward the latter part of 1786 Thayer himself wrote a letter to Boston. It was addressed to his younger brother Nathaniel, and accompanied by a manuscript copy of the account of his conversion.<sup>107</sup> Nathaniel's reply manifested to some extent the first known Boston reaction to Thayer's conversion and his project. It began with the assurance that "the friendship and tenderness" which he had had for his elder brother still continued; but it went on to express his sorrow that that brother had embraced a religion which seemed to the writer "fraught with bigotry and superstition." Nathaniel then set out certain of his own objections to Catholicity. Of these the first was "taken from the persecutions that Catholics have excited against their enemies"; the next, from the absurdity of the Catholics' claim to possess unity of doctrine; the greatest from their claim to possess infallibility. Strangely enough, Nathaniel thought "that all religions equally conduct to salvation."

There can be little doubt that a new phase of expecting Father

<sup>106</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 6 J 7; 6 J 9; *Fordham Jesuit Arch.*, 202 B 10.

<sup>107</sup> Deduced from Thayer's letter to Nathaniel of May 1, 1787 (in *Account of the Conversion*).

Thayer in Boston began in July, 1787. In that month news of him was circulated there by the young Samuel Breck, who had just returned from his more than four years' sojourn in France. He had been in Paris in April-May, 1787, and called on Thayer (then on retreat for the diaconate) at the Seminary. When he left Paris it was with the promise to assist Thayer whenever he should arrive in Boston for the purpose of opening a Catholic chapel.<sup>108</sup> It was Breck, most probably, who was the bearer of Thayer's reply to his brother Nathaniel, dated Paris, May 1, 1787.

Undoubtedly Breck, on his return to Boston, also told friends about his meeting with Thayer and of the latter's intention to return soon to Boston.<sup>109</sup> But nothing is known about the people who thus learned of it nor of its effect upon them.

On June 2, 1787 (Trinity Saturday), Thayer himself was ordained a priest.<sup>110</sup> However, he did not set out immediately to America. He had not yet received any official appointment, and while awaiting it, he went over to London to obtain help "for his mission in Boston." He also took occasion to publish there the account of his conversion.<sup>111</sup> It was a sixty-six-page booklet,<sup>112</sup> very simply written and rather striking in its evident sincerity, logic, and zeal. It ran briefly through the story of his life, touched particularly on the incidents and the personal reflections attending his conversion, and led up convincingly to the expression of his desire to be a missionary to America. "I desire nothing more — for this purpose I wish to return to my own country, in hopes, notwithstanding my unworthiness, to be the instrument of the conversion of my countrymen."

<sup>108</sup> *Recollections of Samuel Breck*, pp. 84-116. <sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>110</sup> *Conversions Remarquables* (2me ed.: April, 1790). Thayer's ordination papers are in *Baltimore Sem. Arch.*

<sup>111</sup> *An Account of the Conversion of the Reverend John Thayer, lately a Protestant Minister at Boston in North America . . . written by himself . . .* This was dated London, Aug. 24, 1787. There were many other editions. See Percival Meritt, "Bibliographical Notes on an Account . . ." in *Publications of Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXV (1923), 129 ff.

<sup>112</sup> Pages 1-36 contained the account of his conversion; this was followed by the letter to his brother (pp. 37-60); and by a letter from a young lady lately received into the Church, dated Aug. 16, 1787 (pp. 61-66). It must have attracted much attention because it ran through four editions in a few months.



In conclusion, he dwelt "with pleasure on the consoling thought, perhaps [God] has only permitted and brought to an end the surprising revolution of which we have been witnesses [the American Revolution], in order to accomplish some great design and much more happy revolution in the order of grace." <sup>113</sup>

There can be no doubt that Father Thayer kept his Boston mission in mind. In London he was, according to Father Plowden,

brimful of zeal for religion and for the political state of America. . . . His aim is to obtain succours here to establish a mission in Boston. I fear he will be slenderly supported. The warmth of his zeal and his want of experience may possibly draw him into improper connections, either here or in America. . . . [He] has often been mentioned by his French friends as a very proper person to be visited with Episcopal authority in his own country.<sup>114</sup>

On November 13, 1787, Father Plowden wrote a most characteristic letter to Father Carroll:

. . . Y'r countryman, now the R. Mr. Thare [Thyers] has been in London, & is returning to France to take his passage to Boston. . . . I am assured that his behaviour was edifying in London. . . . It may, however, be feared, that unless he be controuled by persons of prudence & experience, the old leaven of puritanism in wh. he was educated, may again ferment & sour the spirit of true religion. His well wishers in Europe are displeased to observe him so very eager to begin a mission at Boston, without putting himself under the direction or even communicating his views to you or to any other experienced missionary in America. Mr. Thorpe is sure that by such conduct he will not please Card. Boromei, his protector, who has a high idea of your zeal & prudence. . . .<sup>115</sup>

<sup>113</sup> *An Account of the Conversion*, p. 26. It is possible that the inspiration for this thought came from Father John Carroll, who, in a letter to Father Thorpe in late 1783 used the expression, "You are not ignorant that . . . our religious system has undergone a revolution more extraordinary than our political one." See Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 172-173.

<sup>114</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 6 K 4, Sept. 2, 1787.

<sup>115</sup> Father Plowden to Father Carroll, Nov. 13, 1787 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 6 K 5).

accept that church, and accept her as authoritative for natural reasons, and then take her own explanation of herself and her doctrines as true.”<sup>67</sup> Then, however, he hesitated, and for a year held back. He had the customary prejudices against “the present Catholic Church.” To join it meant, moreover, to break with the whole world in which he had lived, and a “leap in the dark”; and he feared unpleasant surprises. Was there no middle ground, no compromise position, no refuge, for instance, in Anglicanism as represented by the Oxford Movement? But he was too honest to consider such subterfuges very long, and he was, besides, concerned about his soul’s salvation. ‘As the Roman Catholic Church was clearly the Church of history, the only church which had the slightest claims to be regarded as the Body of Christ, it was to her he must go.’<sup>68</sup> On May 28, 1844, he called on Bishop Fenwick for a preliminary discussion. “I have made up my mind, and I shall enter the Church, if she will have me,” he wrote to his confidant, Isaac Hecker. “There is no use in resisting . . . I want you to come and see our good bishop. He is an excellent man — learned, polite, easy, affable, affectionate, and extremely warm-hearted . . . I like him very much.”<sup>69</sup> After two more conferences, the convert’s last objections vanished. Since Bishop Fenwick was leaving for a vacation in Maryland, Brownson was turned over to Bishop Fitzpatrick for a formal course of instruction. On October 20, 1844, at the Cathedral the latter received him into the Church — just about a year before Newman entered.

Though this outcome was not entirely unexpected to the public, immense must have been the sensation that a man universally recognized as one of the greatest, most independent, most audacious thinkers in America and one of the pillars of Liberal and Radical movements, should have made his submission to Rome. Nevertheless, the immediate results were less than might have been expected. Brownson’s conversion was almost the decisive factor in that of his young friend, Isaac Hecker; it probably influenced that of other members of the

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>69</sup> Rev. Walter Elliott, *The Life of Father Hecker* (New York, 1891), p. 147.

Brook Farm group; and it may have hastened others among the numerous conversions of that period. But he had always been too self-sufficient, too rapid, and too deep a thinker to form a school of disciples, who might have followed him. His influence was weakened, moreover, by the fact that he had already made so many changes of religion. Scoffers styled him "Windmill" or "Weathervane Brownson," and predicted that, having been successively a Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Universalist, Agnostic, Unitarian, and Catholic, he would probably turn Mohammedan or Buddhist next week.

At all events, the pilgrim who had hitherto been always *en route* and who had wandered over so many lands and seas, was henceforth to remain, immovably fixed and supremely contented, in the haven he had now selected. Long afterwards, when he composed his spiritual autobiography, he affirmed, in words fit to confound all critics and which he continued to repeat till the end of his life:

In writing it, I have had occasion to review my whole past life, and to renew my thanks to Him who died that we might live, for having conducted me, after so many wanderings, from the abyss of doubt and infidelity to the light and truth of his Gospel, in the bosom of his Church, where I find the peace and repose so long denied me. . . .

I have, as a Catholic, felt and enjoyed a mental freedom which I never conceived possible while I was a non-Catholic. . . .

I can say truly that during the nearly thirteen years of Catholic experience I have found not the slightest reason to regret the step I took. I have had much to try me, and enough to shake me, if shaken I could be, but I have not had even the slightest temptation to doubt, or the slightest inclination to undo what I have done; and have every day found new and stronger reasons to thank Almighty God for his great mercy in bringing me to the knowledge of his church, and permitting me to enter and live in her communion. I know all that can be said in disparagement of Catholics. I am well versed, perhaps no man more so, in Catholic scandals, but I have not been deceived; I have found all that was promised me, all I



ton, but who publicly embraced the Roman Catholic religion at Rome . . . May, 1783, is shortly expected to arrive at Boston in the character of *Popish Bishop*. The history of America never produced an instance of this kind before — his reception will no doubt be becoming a country tolerating and protecting all religions. He exults much in the surprizing revolution in America and predicts that it will be followed by a much happier revolution in the order of grace. However, if the Rev. Mr. Thayer may flatter himself with success in proselyting his American brethren to what he now calls the *true faith*, we may venture to predict that the number of his converts here will not in any measure compensate for the very great trouble he has taken to qualify himself for so *important* a mission! The very simple methods which induced him to *apostatize* from the religion of his country, will prove but feeble, very feeble arguments to induce his brethren to follow his example. Americans are much too enlightened to be easily imposed upon by the dogmas of Rome — and we are too well acquainted with the history of “the whore” not to detest every idea that involves in it martyrdom — inquisition — and *pontifical tyranny!* [unsigned].<sup>123</sup>

There was another article about Father Thayer sent to the *New Hampshire Gazette* at the same time. It was of a much more favorable tenor:

The general toleration in America, the frequent visits of foreigners of that religion to Boston, and the want of the privilege of its rites whilst there (there being no chapel where mass is performed nearer than New York), the fondness that the people in Boston have for novelty, the ripeness our country is in for listening to every sentiment, from our great liberality and what we call charity in religion, are so many arguments to make us conclude that he will make an attempt to build a Romish Chapel in this capital of New England, once the chief seat of Puritanism.<sup>124</sup>

But Father Thayer did not come. Instead, a certain Abbé de la Poterie started the Church here in the latter months of 1788.

<sup>123</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, Boston, Sept. 4, 1788.

<sup>124</sup> *New Hampshire Gazette*, Sept. 4, 1788.



## VII

At the beginning of the important year, 1788, Massachusetts had ratified the new United States Constitution. In so doing it quite plainly manifested a progress of thought in regard to Catholics. This was evidenced in the delegates' reaction to the clause in the Federal Constitution which excluded a religious test for Federal officials. The Convention, which was called to accept or reject the proposed Federal Constitution, met in Boston on January 9, 1788, and continued its sessions until February 7th, on which date its ratification of the document was proclaimed. The matter of the religious test occupied comparatively little of its attention.<sup>125</sup>

Opposition to the omission of the test was voiced in the Convention on January 19, 1788, by a Mr. Singleton, who declared that "by the Constitution, a Papist or an Infidel were as eligible for office as Christians."<sup>126</sup> Several persons, all from small towns, appeared to be much concerned about it. They "still shuddered at the idea that Roman Catholics, Papists and Pagans might be introduced into office; and the Popery and its Inquisition may be established in America." Their sentiment, however, was not of great weight in the Convention. The test was not even mentioned in Governor Hancock's conciliatory propositions of January 31st, which were occasioned by "a diversity of sentiment in the gentlemen of the Convention."<sup>127</sup>

On the other side, "many applauded the liberality of the clause omitting the test, and represented . . . the impropriety and almost impiety of the requisition of a test." Rev. Mr. Shute, of Hingham, opposed a religious test because it "would be attended with injurious consequences to some individuals, and with no advantage to the whole." In the course of his remarks, he asserted "that there are worthy characters among men of every denomination, among the Quakers, the Baptists, the Church of England, the Papists . . ." <sup>128</sup> And notable among

<sup>125</sup> See *Debates and Proceedings in the Convention of Massachusetts, held in the Year 1788* . . . (Boston, 1856).

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 225, 79.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

those who approved and spoke in favor of it were the clerical delegates. Indeed, in the final vote, all but three or four of the score of ministers in the Convention voted in favor of the Constitution.<sup>129</sup>

Among other articles in the press of the day, one that was published in *The Independent Chronicle* may be chosen to illustrate the mind of the victorious party:

Want of charity in the religious system of Europe and of justice in their political governments were the principal moving causes which drove the emigrants of various countries to the American continent. The Congregationalists, Quakers, Presbyterians, and other British dissenters, the Catholics of England and Ireland, the Huguenots of France, the German Lutherans, Calvinists and Moravians, with several other societies, established themselves in the different colonies, thereby laying the ground of that Catholicism in ecclesiastical affairs which has been observable since the late Revolution. Religious liberty naturally promotes corresponding dispositions in matters of government. . . . The quarrel between the United States and the Parliament of Great Britain did not arise so much from objections to the form of government . . . as from a difference concerning certain important rights resulting from the essential principles of liberty. . . .<sup>130</sup>

In the light of all this, it is probable that had a similar convention been then held to consider the religious test in Massachusetts' own Constitution, it would have voted in a similar fashion. The year that the Constitution of the United States was ratified in Massachusetts was the year when the Catholic Church here was founded.

<sup>129</sup> Feb. 6, 1788. Arthur J. Riley, *Catholicism in New England*, 244, n. 25; Joseph F. Thorning, *Religious Liberty in Transition* (Washington, 1931), p. 38.

<sup>130</sup> See also the rest of that striking article, as cited in *The Journal*, p. 335.

PART II

THE ORGANIZED CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BOSTON  
FROM ITS BEGINNINGS TO THE END OF  
BISHOP CHEVERUS' REIGN

BY JOHN E. SEXTON





## CHAPTER I

### THE FIRST FOUNDATION (1788-1789)

THE LONG-ANTICIPATED FATHER THAYER was not the founder of the first Catholic church in Boston. That distinction was reserved, in the Providence of God, to a former chaplain of the French fleet, who called himself the Abbé de la Poterie.

He was attached in the capacity of chaplain to a French fleet which was based in the West Indies and which, in the summer of 1788, made a cruise to northern waters to avoid the tropical hurricanes. At least one other French fleet had made a similar trip to Boston after the Revolution, and still another would come in the following year. The fleet that came in 1788 was commanded by the same Marquis de Sainneville who had brought the first French warship to Boston ten years before. On this new occasion he arrived with a squadron of seven sail and anchored in the harbor on the 28th of August. The French were still welcome visitors in Boston. During the month's sojourn which the fleet made here, the usual courtesies between French officers and American officials were exchanged; amongst others, a dinner given by Governor Hancock on September 17th to the principal French officers and many other gentlemen, and in the evening a ball, attended by an increased number of French officers and of gentlemen and ladies of the town.<sup>1</sup>

When the fleet left on September 28th, the Abbé de la Poterie remained behind, and became the first resident priest in Boston.

#### I

The Abbé's real name was Claude Florent Bouchard. He was

<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Heath's Journal* (ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*): Boston Newspapers: *Independent Chronicle* and *Massachusetts Centinel*, for late August, for September, and for early October.

born November 19, 1751, in the parish of St. Clement, at Craon, in the Diocese of Angers, France; baptized November 21, 1751, the son of "the honorable Claude Bouchard, and Jeanne Maingot, his wife." In his baptismal record <sup>2</sup> there is no mention of the title de la Poterie. By what right the Abbé used it is not clear. His family was of the nobility, but that particular title belonged in another branch. The priest's father had the title *Sieur du Plessis*. He was tax controller at Craon, where he died on July 22, 1757, at the age of forty-five, leaving the care of Claude Florent, aged five, and of a younger child, Marie Jeanne Renée, to their mother.

The father, besides being fairly well off in this world's goods, had also been a devout Catholic. In his will he left explicit directions for his Catholic burial and for the celebration of many Masses for his soul. The mother, too, was a religious woman.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the son, Claude Florent, while still young looked to the priesthood as his vocation. He attended various seminaries, but was finally ordained for his own diocese by the year 1777; later on he spent several years in Rome, perhaps during the war he was a navy chaplain; after the war he served in the Diocese of Lisieux, among others, before leaving France early in 1788 for the West Indies, where he had relatives. It was probably there that he again shipped as a navy chaplain and came to Boston. He had a fairly large annuity from his father's estate.

His story up to that time was summed up later by Bishop Carroll's agent in Rome in the words, "He had disgraced his [family] name and [priestly] character in various countries . . . he had talents and education, but had shamefully made bad use of both." <sup>3</sup>

Quite in line with that history, he deserted from the French fleet when it was in Boston. The commandant, who knew of the desertion, "decided to pay no attention to [it], because he

<sup>2</sup> *Arch. de la Mayenne, Series E, Etat religieux de Craon*, fol. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Father Thorpe to Father Carroll, Dec. 2, 1789, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 J 17; see also same to same, Dec. 5, 1789, *ibid.*, 8 J 18.

regarded the Abbé Poterie as *un mauvais sujet*, whom he was well rid of. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

Apparently he did not intend to stay in Boston, for on October 6th, he wrote from there to the Bishop of Quebec, to ask a place in that diocese. It is indeed true that he also said in the same letter, "I see no means of establishing myself [in Boston] or working [here] for the good of souls."<sup>5</sup>

It must have been almost immediately afterwards that he again changed his mind and resolved to stay. He had been approached by the French merchant, M. Baury de Bellerive, who, he later said, "inspired, nourished, and fomented the chimerical hopes of his powerful assistance which were to place the Abbé above every unfortunate event, and never to fail. . . ."<sup>6</sup> And M. Baury was afterwards thanked by Father Carroll for his assistance "in promoting and encouraging the introduction of divine service in Boston."<sup>7</sup>

M. Baury, in fact, gathered together a congregation and offered his own residence on Green Street in the West End for divine services, probably until he could arrange a more suitable place. On the last two Sundays of October (19th/26th), the Abbé de la Poterie said Mass at M. Baury's house.<sup>8</sup>

The exact spot was very close to the site of the present St. Joseph's Church and rectory. Among those who were present at one of these services was Thomas Walley, Jr., then a Protestant, but destined later to become a Catholic and even to have Mass said in his own house.<sup>9</sup>

Neither M. Baury nor the other Catholics gathered for wor-

<sup>4</sup> *Arch. Marine, Corr. Cons., New York*, vol. 2, fol. 227, dispatch no. 247. *Poterie Papers* (copies in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*). From at least 1783, he used the title de la Poterie. Percival Merritt, *Sketches of the Three Earliest Roman Catholic Priests in Boston* (Cambridge, 1923. Reprint from *Publications of Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXV, 173 ff.).

<sup>5</sup> Original in *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*

<sup>6</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 15, 1790.

<sup>7</sup> Father Carroll to La Poterie, Dec. 24, 1788 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>8</sup> Bishop Fenwick, in his *Memoirs* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*), p. 11, speaks of "an apartment in the western part of the city where he celebrated Mass . . . on Sundays," thus indicating that services were held there also on Oct. 19th, possibly also on the 12th.

<sup>9</sup> Letter of Thomas Walley, Oct. 13, 1846, in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, XVIII (1907), 45.

ship at his house knew the previous life story of this priest. They were eager to have Mass and the Sacraments, and undoubtedly urged him to stay among them; he was willing to have a place to exercise his ministry and so he stayed. They made arrangements to provide a more suitable place for divine service. It was probably through one of their non-Catholic friends that M. Baury soon obtained such a place. An unused Protestant church was put at his disposal free of charge. By a remarkable coincidence, this church had an historical connection with the French. It had been built and used by the French Protestants of Boston during the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> In the year 1788, it was still remembered as "the French church," although it had not been occupied by its original Huguenot congregation for the previous forty years. During that time it had been occupied by a Congregational group, which abandoned it in 1784. This building, which was the first real home of the Catholics in Boston, was located at 18 School Street, about midway between the present Province and Washington Streets, on the side opposite City Hall. It was a small brick structure, thirty-five feet long and thirty feet wide.

Catholic tradition in Boston believes that it was the Perkins family which made the church available to M. Baury and his co-religionists.<sup>11</sup> And there are good reasons to accept this belief. On the one hand, there is evidence that M. Baury stood in friendly relations with this prominent merchant family.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, there is evidence to show that the Perkins family was in a position to obtain the use of the church for Catholics.<sup>13</sup> Whatever the details of the transaction, the School Street Church, built by French Protestants and when sold by them restricted "to the sole use of a Protestant Church," was made available to French and Irish Catholics in late October, 1788. Even though the building was in poor condition and no

<sup>10</sup> The lot was purchased in 1704, the church built in 1716, and used by the Huguenots until 1748 (*Suffolk Deeds*, book 22, pp. 100, 102).

<sup>11</sup> Arthur T. Connolly, in *U.S. Cath. Hist. Mag.*, II (1889), 266.

<sup>12</sup> *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XXII, 320 n., 321 n.

<sup>13</sup> Papers "of the Meeting-House (lately called the French Church) in Boston," mss. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*



charge was asked for rent, the transaction was a gesture of friendship to Catholics by some non-Catholics and deserves grateful remembrance.<sup>14</sup>

The Abbé de la Poterie also claimed to have done his share in providing this new place of worship for Boston Catholics. According to his account, "on October 29" (26?) he wrote in its interest "to Guadeloupe, where he had relatives,"<sup>15</sup> and also to Europe. He was undoubtedly giving an address where he might receive his annuity. An offer on the Abbé's part to use some of his money for fitting out the church would be quite in character. There is no doubt that one letter to Europe was actually sent: directed to the Archbishop of Paris, it begged that prelate to aid the new church at Boston.<sup>16</sup>

On Sunday, November 2, 1788, the Abbé de la Poterie celebrated in the School Street Church what may properly be called the first public Mass in Boston, dedicating the edifice to Catholic worship. In the afternoon he held a second service, at which "he pronounced a French sermon . . . and made solemn prayer for the dead, according to the rites and usage of the Roman Church upon All Saints' Day."<sup>17</sup> The little edifice was crowded; in fact, the concourse of people assembled was "so great as to create an impression of some unfortunate accident, from the falling of the gallery, and they were obliged to make temporary props for this building, which . . . threatens immediate ruin, unless reasonably repaired," so *The Centinel* reported when describing the epoch-making event.<sup>18</sup>

At the dedication service the Abbé "exposed in a solemn manner to the veneration of the Christians, the true Cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Father Rousselet to Father Carroll, Jan. 15, 1790.

<sup>15</sup> La Poterie to Bishop of Quebec, March 1, 1789 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>16</sup> Bishop Fenwick, *Memoirs*, p. 12 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). The date of sending of this letter is unknown; it could hardly have been later than January 15, 1789.

<sup>17</sup> When Nov. 2nd falls on Sunday, as it did in 1788, the Commemoration of All Souls is made on the 3rd, with the usual First Vespers introducing the service on Sunday afternoon.

<sup>18</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, Nov. 6th. See also the *Boston Gazette*, for Nov. 3rd: "Yesterday, for the first time, Mass was publicly read at the French Chapel in School Street, formerly improved by Rev. Mr. Le Mercier."

<sup>19</sup> The Abbé himself in one place declares that the dedication occurred the day before, November 1st, the Feast of All Saints. In any case, the first Mass there was celebrated on Sunday, November 2nd.

The Abbé was a Knight of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and had obtained this relic in Rome. Hence the title of our first church, one which it has borne ever since and which has grown so dear to Boston Catholics! By a remarkable coincidence it was the same as that under which the very first Christian service on our soil was offered up, nearly two hundred years before. The Abbé de la Poterie afterwards had his relic placed "in a mahogany box with brass ornaments." Later on it was removed to the sacristy of the old Cathedral, and thence to the present Cathedral, where it is still preserved, a constant reminder to our present-day Catholics, as it was to the earlier generations, of our dedication. At this first service the Abbé had also, to use his own words, "placed the Catholic Congregation here under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

The strictly religious parts of these services did not get into the newspapers. They were described in other places. The account of the event, as given in *The Centinel*, was an appeal for funds, quite patently inserted by the Abbé himself. After the introduction about the need of repairs, the article went on to say:

In this enlightened age, when there appears a disposition in all civilized nations to admit a general and christian toleration, tending greatly to the strength and splendour of government — the Roman Catholic Congregation is encouraged to hope that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and especially the town of Boston, so distinguished by the humanity, politeness, generosity and candour of their citizens, will not be in any view deficient in those acts of benevolence which have lately been performed at New York and Philadelphia, by the Protestants themselves who have contributed with the greatest munificence towards the erection of Catholic Churches, inasmuch as all Temples and Churches in all countries are public and venerable places, destined to render the homage due to the Divinity.

He then presented a plan to obtain money for the necessary repairs and "the indispensable ornaments": it was to the effect

that the services would be accompanied by music and entrance would be by ticket only, of which

the price is left to the generosity of the purchasers. . . . The little door only will be open. The tickets are different for the morning and the afternoon. The chapel being small, the number of persons to be admitted is limited, so that no one may be incommoded.

The attendance on Sunday the 9th and Sunday the 16th of November, as well as the attitude of the people, was promising enough to fix the Abbé in his purpose of establishing himself regularly in Boston. Accordingly, on November 19th, he wrote a letter to the Apostolic Prefect of the American Missions, the Very Rev. Father John Carroll. In this he informed the Superior that he had come to Boston with a fleet of his own nation, and that having set foot on land, he desired to stay there, and now requested to be employed in the ministry at Boston for the spiritual good of the Catholics living there. The latter also, rejoicing in the hope of finally having a resident priest, sent similar requests to the Very Rev. Prefect. The letters from the Boston Catholics certainly included one from M. Baur de Bellerive and another from Mrs. Margaret Mary Price, whose name appears here for the first time in connection with the Church. These letters were sent in care of the Chevalier d'Anmour, French agent, residing at Baltimore.<sup>20</sup>

Although the Abbé de la Poterie's own letter to Father Carroll is not extant, it can be reconstructed in great part from other available documents. It undoubtedly started, like the priest's previous letter to the Bishop of Quebec, with the mention of his former position with the French fleet and his desire to discontinue work on shipboard.

He expressed his

sentiments of profound gratitude to the Father of Mercies, that He had deigned to conduct [him] to Boston by a series of un-

<sup>20</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, Jan., 1789; to La Poterie, Dec. 24, 1788 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); La Poterie, "To the Publick," ca. March 1, 1789 (*Boston Pub. Library*).

expected events, to begin there the worship and lay the foundations and perhaps even to erect the edifice of our Holy Religion.

Another part of the letter contained the assertion that

since the American Revolution, I have always been of the opinion that Providence was preparing a more surprising revolution in the order of grace, and who knows if I am not destined to be the instrument employed by the hand of God to carry out this great work?

The Abbé also set forth his own fitness for the work. He gave his own version of his past life, accompanied by divers recommendations, certificates of his studies, of his ordination, and of his successes, particularly at Rome. He wrote that he had spent two years there, and had a respectable circle of acquaintances in that city, in which he mentioned the Cardinal of York, in particular. He summed up his own character by asserting his "disinterestedness, [his] detachment from the empty praises of this world, and [his] eagerness to undergo hardship." He likewise made mention of Father Thayer's non-arrival in the city, and added various observations about the hostility of some Bostonians in the latter's regard. In addition, the Abbé made pointed reference to his own partial knowledge of the English language and his present application to the study of it, as a further recommendation for his receiving the faculties requested. Besides faculties, he requested of the Superior a supply of the Holy Oils, and of other things needed in the ministry, such as a directory (*ordo*), books of devotion for the people, and probably even the necessary vestments and sacred vessels, as well as direct financial aid.<sup>21</sup>

Father Carroll was "much pleased with the letters of the Abbé," which, as he declared some months later, "were written in the language of an apostle, and breathed only zeal and goodness." The Superior was agreeably impressed further by the sentiments of submission which permeated the letters. Lastly, he regarded Father La Poterie's recommendations as both

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*



strong and indisputable. Some of them were written by persons known to Father Carroll personally, and others by persons known to him by reputation as good people.<sup>22</sup>

On December 24th, therefore, he sent faculties to the new French priest of Boston, and expressed his own thanks to the two members of the congregation who had aided in this establishment of the Church at Boston. He was well pleased with this final fulfillment of the hopes which both the Boston Catholics and he himself had so long fostered.

When Father Carroll sent the faculties of the diocese to the Abbé de la Poterie, he expressed his regret at not receiving his letter until December 22nd. He had been absent from Baltimore until the 20th, and even then had not immediately received the Abbé's letter from the Chevalier D'Anmour.

After praising the virtuous qualities which Father La Poterie claimed for himself in his letter, the Superior admonished him to foster these apostolic sentiments "by a continual watch over yourself, and an inviolable assiduity in making your meditation," and deplored his lack of priestly companionship and aid. "If Father Thayer, who has been so long expected, would only arrive, you could enjoy this consolation: I do not know what keeps him. . . ."

He also told Father La Poterie that Father Thayer, while in London, had been "given a well-chosen and large collection of Catholic books and other objects necessary for establishing Catholic worship at Boston." These would naturally be available when the convert priest should arrive. In the meantime, if Father Thayer should not have arrived by spring, the Superior himself would then send books of devotion to Boston. The poverty of the Catholics in the South, however, gave little, if any, hope to expect from them any other help for Boston.

Father Carroll's letter arrived in Boston shortly after the New Year. Undoubtedly, it gave great joy to the Catholics here and to their priest. The latter hastened to acknowledge it, and

<sup>22</sup> Father Carroll to Father Plowden, May 8 and July 8, 1789 (*Fordham Arch.*); Father Carroll to Propaganda, Jan., and June 1, 1789 (copies in collection of Msgr. Peter Guilday, of the Catholic University, henceforth cited as *Guilday Transcripts*).

in his reply was very careful to praise himself. He noted, for example, that he had just received a letter from the Bishop of Quebec (in answer to his of October 6th) and undoubtedly turned the Bishop's polite "compliments for his zeal" into a recommendation.<sup>23</sup>

Father Carroll, writing at that time to Propaganda, said that Father La Poterie's *letters* to him "breathed only zeal and goodness. I fear only that there may be some excess of the former."<sup>24</sup>

The Abbé had acquainted the Superior with his plans for the church here and what he had already done. He had not waited until this comparatively late date for Father Carroll's favorable answer to his petitions; he had already begun the repair and renovation of the church.

His first care was for the sanctuary, that part of a Catholic church which was different. From items still extant in the church's book of accounts, it is possible to reconstruct the work which was done.

Probably on the day of the first service, few of the necessary material changes in the church had been made: perhaps by that time the only preparation had been cleaning the church. Probably the altar stone and the sacred vestments and vessels used in that first service were part of Father La Poterie's navy chaplain kit. However, only a short time elapsed before all the essentials of Catholic worship were provided, and Catholics could see what they had been accustomed to in their home lands, and non-Catholics what they had seldom, if ever, seen except in foreign lands. Many of the non-Catholics — "the liberal part of the inhabitants" — were highly pleased with it, and in the first days, at least, attended "on the worship of God there, according to the mode prescribed by the Roman Church."

They would approach it along School Street, from which it

<sup>23</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, June 1, 1789. Also see endorsement in La Poterie's original letter of Oct. 6, 1788, in *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*: "Répondu négativement, avec compliments sur son zèle." It is possible that the Quebec Bishop's letter arrived in Boston at a slightly later date.

<sup>24</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, Jan., 1789 (*Prop. Fid. Arch., Scrit. Ref., Amer. Cent.*, III, fol. 95).

was set back a little way; its tiny grass plot protected by "a fence with a gate and gate-posts, with a key for the gate." A paved walk led from the gate to the main door, above which three large windows served to decorate the façade outside and furnish light inside. There were windows in the side walls also, and at least one in the rear, where the vestry was situated.

As one entered the church, one passed under the gallery and stood in an aisle that was flanked by twenty-five pews, fourteen on one side, eleven on the other. A baptismal font occupied the space of three pews on the latter side. Non-Catholics were accustomed to all this and to the pulpit, which was there as well. What they had eyes for was the new things. They would see along the side walls, probably in the spaces broken by the windows, six pictures, framed, "representing the creation of the world." But they would turn their gaze immediately to the altar, for that was what made a Catholic church different. And there Father La Poterie had exerted his best efforts.

The sanctuary rails by which it was separated from the body of the church were mahogany on top. Mahogany was likewise used for the altar table, which was surmounted in the middle by a mahogany tabernacle, and this in turn was flanked by the double altar steps — the *gradini*, as they are called, likewise of mahogany. All the woodwork for the sanctuary and altar had been done by Samuel Stratford, cabinet-maker, whose shop was in Kilby Street, at a cost of over two hundred dollars.

On the lower altar step there was on either side a two-branch silver-plated candlestick with silver support: while on each upper step two tall candlesticks "with springs" stood beside the tabernacle. Above was a cross, "formerly belonging to Mr. Bell, the carpenter," and later given to the church by him. During the celebration of the Mass would be seen a large silver gilt chalice, a silver gilt ciborium, and two large silver gilt cruets and dish. These sacred vessels and the silver candlesticks had come from Paris, purchased for the account of the new Boston church by the Archbishop of Paris.

On either side of the altar, most probably attached to the wall, were "two mahogany boxes with brass ornaments," one for

the Holy Oils, the other for the relic of the True Cross. The whole stood out more vividly to the eye by reason of a damask silk canopy with gold fringe over the altar and a silk hanging attached to the rear wall behind it. And stretching above all, across the whole rear of the sanctuary, was "a large inscription, painted in gold letters." It is not known what the inscription was, but one's mind turns easily to a text which was a favorite of the Abbé and which occupies a prominent place in his references to the church, "Lauda Sion Salvatorem."

To complete the picture, one must mention the three painted benches and the few straw chairs inside the sanctuary for priest and altar boys; the large mahogany candlestick, which held the Paschal candle on Holy Saturday and in the Eastertide, and the picture of Archbishop Juigné, of Paris, which he presented to the first parish here, and which had a place somewhere in the church.

Boston Catholics of the present day reverently reconstruct the scene of the first public Catholic services in our first Church of the Holy Cross. We can see again what our few score fathers in the faith saw when they went to church: and what the non-Catholics of Boston and vicinity came to see, with sympathy, interest, curiosity, or hostility.<sup>25</sup>

A unique element in the Sunday services inaugurated here by the Abbé (and later printed by him) was the form for the priest's discourse, read at the Gospel time:

You ought, my brethren, to approach this altar with reverence, and with confidence, there to present, by our hands, this divine host, and there to be offered with it yourselves, and with the whole church; for it is Jesus Christ entire, that is, the head and the members, who offers it to his Father, as the sovereign Priest, and who is there offered as a victim with the Faithful who are still militant upon earth, and with all the Saints who now reign in Heaven.

Let us, therefore, unite our hearts, and, during this holy sacrifice, let us pray God for the Holy Apostolick and Roman

<sup>25</sup> Based on data in Book of Accounts of Holy Cross Church (in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).



Church, that He would be pleased to preserve it, give it peace, maintain it in union, to govern it through all the earth.

We pray for our Holy Father the Pope, for the Right Reverend Dr. John Carroll, the Catholick Superior in the United States of America; for all prelates and pastors of the Church, that being filled with the Spirit of God, they may edify and lead the flock which Providence has entrusted them with.

We pray for the prosperity of the Congress, for the happy establishment of the Federal Government of the United States; in particular, for the State of Massachusetts, its Governor and its Magistrates; for the King of France and the other friends and allies of America; for all those who represent the interest of His Most Christian Majesty in foreign countries.

We pray for the union and concord of all Christians, for the peace and tranquillity of this country, for the inhabitants of this city; we pray for the benefactors and founders of our Congregation (for those who have this day made an offering of the blessed bread), for the tranquillity of families, for wants of widows, of orphans, of captives, of travellers, and of all those who are in poverty, in oppression and in suffering.

In addition, the priest at this point prayed also for the dead "according to the tradition of the Apostles and the perpetual usage of the whole Church." And finally he made some general announcements about "those whom we cannot admit to our communion." This last part of the priest's "form of discourse," taken from some French ritual and wholly unsuited to American conditions would later occasion some ridicule and more trouble in the future; but the whole first part was both in excellent taste and of solid worth. Indeed, there is reason to believe that it antedated Bishop Carroll's well-known Prayer for the Civil Authorities by almost three years, and perhaps had some influence on the latter's composition.<sup>26</sup>

One of the direct results of Father La Poterie's presence here was the formal organization of the Catholic congregation. Some time before February 22, 1789, the members of the church had been officially assembled by the Abbé, and upon his recommendation had passed certain regulations. They had marked

<sup>26</sup> Peter Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll* (New York, 1922), p. 432 n.

out the first Sunday of every month as the regular meeting day. They also named as special feast days for this church "the first Sunday in May and the second Sunday in September, days of the finding and raising the Holy Cross," and the 17th of March, "to the honor of St. Patrick." They had decided on the time for services, High Mass at eleven o'clock, and Vespers and Benediction at three o'clock on Sundays; and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at five o'clock on Thursdays. Organization of a congregation in those days also meant the appointment or election of wardens. The Boston congregation naturally elected M. Baury as the first warden. The other warden was an Irishman, either Patrick Campbell or perhaps John Magner.

The first duty of wardens in general was the care of the temporalities. They took up the collections in the church and had charge of the repairs. In the case of the Boston congregation, however, it is plain that, at first, Father La Poterie himself ordered the repairs and was personally responsible for the debts incurred. By January 29th, however, the wardens appear to have exercised a fairly large measure of control, probably through a committee, which the priest referred to as "the chapter."

Through their agency, undoubtedly, at some moment in the late winter or spring, the Catholic congregation took over the responsibility of providing a residence for the priest. In the earliest part of the year the Abbé had his dwelling in Quaker's Lane, on the same street with the French Consul.<sup>27</sup> But later on, reference is made to lodgings in a house at 23 Union Street, at the corner of Hanover, which the priest occupied in the name of the congregation.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, there is good evidence to support the belief that the congregation likewise paid the priest a salary. At the end of his stay in Boston, the Abbé was compelled by M. Baury to "sign a receipt for 120 pounds lawful money," which sum of money, it was particularly stated, the congregation had given him. The most probable explanation of the Abbé's receiving money from

<sup>27</sup> *Boston Directory*, 1789.

<sup>28</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, June 19, 1789.

the church, paid out by the first warden, is salary, including some expenses.

Thus, Boston had its priest, its church, its regular services, its fully organized congregation, its priest's house, and its priest's provision for maintenance.

It is noteworthy that Father La Poterie made all his announcements in English and not in French; and also that both the priest and the French Consul spoke of the Irish first. There can be little doubt that in this small congregation the Irish were in the majority, but that the French were more prominent by wealth and position.

Among the members known by name were: Louis Baury, Mamé Masson, Mrs. Price, Jutau, Garreaux, L'Anus, Gardett, Dalga, Cailleaux du Rivage, Murat, Després, Dehon, and Aubry, among the French; and John Magner, Patrick Campbell, Mrs. Lobb, John Duggan, Smith, Owen Callahan, Matthew Cottril, Michael Burns, John Torpy, and John McBride, among the Irish.

On the Sunday before Lent, which happened to fall that year on February 22nd, the new pastor published a document which took the form of a Pastoral Letter. It is a curious and characteristic piece. It began with the episcopal style:

CLAUDIUS FLORENT BOUCHARD DE LA POTERIE, Doctor of Divinity, Prothonotary of the Holy Church and of the Holy See of Rome, Apostolic Vice-Prefect and Missionary, Curate of the Catholick Church of the Holy Cross at Boston in North America — to all faithful Christians entrusted of our care and of our spiritual jurisdiction, salvation and blessing in Jesus Christ, the shepherd and bishop of our souls.

After this pompous introduction, the document continues with contents so typical of the Abbé that some excerpts of it should be quoted:

We make known to you, our dearly beloved brethren, the wonderful designs of Divine Providence towards us, which, by a course of unheard-of-events, has brought us to this city, here to open the first publick exercise, and here to lay the foundation, perhaps even here to erect the edifice of our holy religion.

Since the American Revolution, this Divine Providence has brought about a revolution still more extraordinary in the method of grace; and being designated to be one of its instruments in the hand of God, with what sentiments of profound gratitude to the Father of mercies ought we not to be penetrated? But, at the same time, we look with awe upon the immensity of the duties, to which our office subjects us. The entire knowledge of their extent, and of our own insufficiency, the more powerfully engages us, and ought to incline you also, by the interest you have in the success of the ministry, to implore for us assistance from Him, with whom we can do all things, as without him we can do nothing.

My Lord Carroll, the ecclesiastical Superior of the Roman Hierarchy in the United States of America, did, on the 24th of December last, communicate to me very ample powers (for which we have requested, in quality of French missionary, to be registered in the French Consul's Chancery-Office at Boston), to spend our time in this city, here to exercise our cares and vigilance, and to give you all the spiritual assistance in our power.

We invite you all, ye Christians in general, and we ardently press them in bowels of the immense love of Jesus Christ, very fervently to assist in the divine service of our Church, ye Frenchmen especially, our dear fellow-countrymen, and you Americans, their faithful allies. What consolation for you in these happy days, the admirable fruits of a peace so glorious to your own bravery, and to our august and most Christian Monarch; what consolation, I say, to be able freely here to signalize your faith, your zeal, your religion, by the most inviolable fidelity to the holy and religious observances of our country, although in a foreign land. It is the part of your greatness of soul to draw down, by the multiplied examples of your good works, upon this happy country, and upon yourselves, the most plentiful blessings of Heaven.

The Abbé had copied the custom of some French bishops to issue Lenten Pastorals. In this one he promulgated the Church's Lenten regulations, as they applied in the United States in those days, and as he had learned them from Father Carroll's faculties. He ended in true episcopal style:



Given at Boston in North America, under our hand, and the seal of our arms, the 22nd of February, Quinquagesima Sunday, anno salutis 1789. Signed, La Poterie, Vice-Prefect and Apostolick Missionary, Curate of the Holy Cross at Boston.

Appended to the Pastoral proper, there was a section of some seven pages, containing "the order of the publick offices and of the divine service, during the fortnight of Easter." This was an elaborate calendar and explanation of the ceremonies of Holy Week (which that year began on April 5th). In it the Abbé set out a strenuous program for himself. "Daily Mass at eleven o'clock, before and after which, equally as during the whole of Lent time, the Priest will listen to the confessions of all good Christians, who shall be pleased to comply with the Paschal duty." Then the complete solemn functions of Holy Week.

## II

One outstanding individual, who might naturally have been expected to be a prominent member of the Boston congregation was conspicuous by his absence from its services, and his lack of coöperation in its organization.

Etienne L'Etombe, who had been French Consul here since the war, never gave any coöperation to the Abbé. Neither the Consul himself nor any of his staff ever attended church services; they even absented themselves from the dedication ceremonies of November 2nd. Nor did they give any help in goods or money to the new congregation or its founder. Some explanation of this may be found in L'Etombe's knowledge of the Abbé's previous history, transmitted from the Consul-General in New York. It cannot be doubted that the Consul's passive opposition to the priest was also due, in some measure, to the latter's being under the patronage of M. Baury. For Baury and the Consul were at odds, and each had his following.<sup>29</sup>

Whatever the merits of either side, the French were divided.

<sup>29</sup> La Poterie, "To the Impartial Public," *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 15, 1790.

Baury was the head of a party which did not bend the knee to the Consul, and Father La Poterie's association with Baury was interpreted by the Consul as lending "himself to an intrigue"; of course, it served to deprive the priest of the Consul's support. Added reasons for the latter's refusal to coöperate publicly with the new Catholic establishment here were said by him to be the Abbé's "excess of zeal . . . as well as the ridicule which he is bringing upon his congregation." Nevertheless, underlying the Consul's quasi-official attitude of non-recognition, there were more weighty and substantial factors than the Abbé's previous history, his present associations, and his personal eccentricities. The other reasons had to do with the French Government's continued religious policy. The Consul "had orders in his official instructions not to interfere in any fashion whatsoever in the internal affairs of the State of Massachusetts — [and as he] was likewise cognizant of the extreme jealousy of this Government, whose constitutional principles allow its citizens the exercise of any cult they prefer, but [which] oppose the intervention of any foreign power," he had cautiously awaited the outcome of events before committing himself. And he had been particularly annoyed in this regard by "the continual abuse which [the Abbé] makes of the [French] King's name."

So the Consul-General's office reported to the French Minister at Paris. In this, they undoubtedly echoed the Consul himself who wrote to the same Minister an identical explanation of his attitude. He declared that

civil tolerance has only been established in this Republic by its Constitution in 1774 [*sic*]. Previously, the Roman religion was subject here, as in England, to prohibitive laws, and its ministers to the penalty of death; they even burned the effigy of the Pope here every year on the first of March [*sic*]. It was, therefore, a matter of importance for me to lessen the prejudices of a people who were our Allies. I *secretly* desired the establishment of this church (which would have prospered in better hands). And whenever the Abbé Poterie came to me, I forgot neither advice nor exhortation to this effect. . . .

The Consul also asserted that he had even favored the priest by his silence, for he had evaded "all the questions put to him on his account by the Magistrates, the Citizens, and the Ministers of the Holy Gospel." In fine, he had "restricted himself to such personal good offices toward M. de la Poterie as could give no offense to the State of Massachusetts."<sup>30</sup>

It was because of the French official policy that the Abbé had his first known setback in Boston. It happened shortly after he received the faculties from Father Carroll. With these in hand he went, on January 17th, to the Consul's office and presented a request to register his official acts of baptism, marriage, burial, etc., in the French Chancery. When the Consul refused to comply, for the reasons above given,<sup>31</sup> the Abbé then wrote a letter of complaint to the Vice-Consul-General at New York. After mentioning the particular point at issue, he continued with a kind of general indictment of the Consul:

During the three months in which our holy religion has been publicly practised in Boston, M. De L'Etombe, instead of protecting the religion of the King, has constantly refused to aid it. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that the Court can not be other than pleased to see the American Revolution continue its course by extending its effect to the order of grace, and causing the holy religion of His Majesty to be established here as well as in the other parts of this country. . . .

Secondly, because of the Consul's absence from divine worship, many of these good Irish go so far as to say that he is a Huguenot. I try, nevertheless, to dissuade them of this error, through recommending him by name in the public prayers in company with all those who represent His Christian Majesty in foreign countries. . . .<sup>32</sup>

Naturally, the Consul also wrote his side of the story to the Vice-Consul-General, who used it largely in his reply to the

<sup>30</sup> La Forest to La Luzerne, Jan. 30, 1789; L'Etombe to La Luzerne, April 30, 1789 (*infra*).

<sup>31</sup> L'Etombe to La Luzerne, April 30, 1789 (*Arch. Marine, Corr. Cons., Boston*), vol. 2, fol. 349.

<sup>32</sup> *Arch. Marine, Corr. Cons., New York*, vol. 2, fols. 227-237, Jan. 23, 1789.

Abbé. This was dated at New York, January 30, 1789, and informed the Abbé that he was acting pastor in Boston,

under the protection of the State of Massachusetts and with the authorization of the Apostolic Prefect in the United States. In a word, you are not chaplain of the consulate at Boston, but a minister of the Gospel under the sovereignty of Massachusetts. You have, therefore, no reason to call upon the good offices of M. de L'Etombe, except when your documents need his legalization to have force in the Kingdom and its dependencies; and for this, it suffices that he witness your signature.

The letter added that the French officials knew of the Abbé's desertion from de Sainneville's squadron.<sup>33</sup>

The Vice-Consul-General likewise made a report of this affair to his Home Government, again using the information furnished by the Boston Consul. He accused the Abbé of

views of domination and intolerance toward the King's subjects at Boston, [and of engaging in a campaign] of calumny and persecution against M. de L'Etombe. . . . I am informed that he does everything in his power to hurt and to discredit him; he seeks to alienate all the French residents of Boston against him; he names him in the public prayers, implores Heaven for his conversion, and, in fine, permits himself the most reprehensible things. . . . The annoyance which he occasions to M. de L'Etombe and the disorder which he causes, among the French, in the Boston district can only be stopped by complaining to the Prefect Apostolic and to the Government of the State. It would be helpful if you would authorize me to ask the Count de Moustier to take such a step, in the event that M. de la Poterie has not changed his conduct by the time your orders arrive.<sup>34</sup>

At the very time when the Consul-General was writing these letters, the Abbé gave a signal proof of "abusing the King's name" in a document which he published in Boston on January 29th. In it he also manifested his poor judgment and his financial imprudence. Running into debt to the amount of

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 231, Jan. 30, 1789.

<sup>34</sup> La Forest to La Luzerne, Jan. 30, 1789 (*ibid.*, fol. 227).



nearly five hundred dollars, even if it was for the church, was undoubtedly imprudent, with a congregation small in number and generally poor in this world's goods; attempting to get money for paying this debt by exploiting Boston's gratitude to the French King was in flagrant opposition to French foreign policy. The Abbé

therefore has the honour to invite and request all good Christians, who are acquainted with the generosity of the King of France and his subjects (the Marquis de la Fayette has very recently given a noble specimen of his generosity to the town of Boston) to assist him in the speedy payment of the debt.<sup>35</sup>

"To attain this object by the most unexceptionable means," the Abbé went on to state that he had established in the vestry, not only the ordinary register for baptisms, marriages, and burials, but likewise a second register

with proper columns and divisions, made by two church wardens . . . for monies received and expended, in which the names of all the donors and founders of the Congregation will be inscribed, and gratefully transmitted to posterity, with the date, sum, and quality of their generous donations; and whenever contribution is made in the Church, the amount will be registered, in the same manner, immediately after divine service. The entire proceeds of the publick munificence will be inviolably reserved to pay, in their turn, those to whom it is due, and to purchase necessities: and a statement of the expenses will be laid before the Chapter [*sic*], without any article being inserted upon the private account of Monsieur l'abbé, who will provide for his own particular exigencies. By these means, and by an account most scrupulously economical, open for the inspection of the world, he indulges the hope of gaining the confidence of the charitable and well-disposed, of establishing the Church upon a solid basis, and of making punctual payments.<sup>36</sup>

The Abbé then advertised his purpose of opening a school. This was not, as one might expect, a religious school for Catholic children, but a regular private school for children "of every

<sup>35</sup> "To the Public," Jan. 29, 1789.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

class of citizens, whose generosity he feels it is important to secure effectually." He purposed

to instruct the youth in the belles lettres in general, and in the various branches of French, Latin, and Italian literature; and will teach them, with pleasure, a short, easy, and intelligent method of understanding, reading, writing, and speaking these three languages. . . . [He did not stipulate for any personal recompense, but only hoped] for a small, free, and voluntary gratuity, according to the good pleasure and abilities of each individual, who may subscribe in the Register of Receipts, deposited in the Vestry, whatever he may please to contribute; and all names will be enrolled among the donors and founders of the Congregation.<sup>37</sup>

The school was to begin upon the 20th of April, and continue every day afterwards, except Sunday, from eight until eleven in the morning. He would also devote one hour in the afternoon to those who might not be able to attend in the morning. He would not bring up religious questions, unless expressly requested. The spirit of Christian toleration was, he asserted, "the most dear and favorite principle of his heart." If his success should eventually be equal to his good intentions, he would, in time, institute "an Academical Boarding School, for the benefit of those whose parents may wish them to be instructed in the Roman-Catholick Religion." Finally, he proposed to furnish and to dispose of all books of piety and learning, necessary for these two objects.<sup>38</sup>

The first part of this document was a direct appeal to the charity of the American public and an attempt to play upon their sense of obligation to the French King and the French people. Shortly after its publication, the letter of the French Vice-Consul-General arrived in Boston.

Father La Poterie's answer to it appeared in the Pastoral Letter which the priest gave to the public at that time. In this he emphasized the American character of his mission and denied

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* It is rather remarkable that he set forth as a means to assist his finances the very projects in which Father Thayer was interested, one that of a school; the other, the distribution (for sale) of Catholic books.

any dependence "upon the authority of Monsieur the Consul," but took a direct slap at the latter's attitude. The Consul's

duty [he stated] most certainly is to protect in all points the religion of the King, his master; if he does not do it, he is accountable for it, and not I; but I am entirely independent of him, and I hold my mission, my orders, and all my powers immediately from the Holy Apostolick See, from the Bishops, and from those who represent them. . . . However, I avow and confess my dependence only upon all good hearts, spread through the whole universe.<sup>39</sup>

Hardly a week after the Abbé published his Pastoral he gave out another address to the public, and in it made an even more direct attack upon the Consul. He charged that French official with having prevented a dying Catholic from obtaining the priest's services which he had requested. The story of this incident was immediately followed by the statement that "false and scandalous aspersions" had been made against him, tending to disgrace his character. This action was done, he asserted, by "those who were his grief, whereas they ought to be his greatest consolation. . . . Their conduct is diametrically opposed to the holy Mass which I preach; their sentiments are diametrically opposed to mine." He meant the Consul, of course, whom he also described as "one of those bold spirits with whom the world is unfortunately too much infested, a Voltarian atheist, deist, what you please. By the gossip which he spreads, he turns away the hearts of many, who would otherwise have the most favorable dispositions imaginable."<sup>40</sup>

There can be no doubt that the "insinuations" which the Abbé referred to were identical with those which the Consul had reported to his chief in New York in mid-January. They touched the priest's person, his mission, and his motives. The Abbé, in order to clear himself of these charges, offered to show the public his credentials (they were evidently the same ones that he had sent to Father Carroll in November), and pro-

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, ca. March 1, 1789.

<sup>40</sup> To the Bishop of Quebec, March 1, 1789 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

tested at the same time that he was "by no means actuated by any selfish motive and has no other views but the glory of the Priesthood, the respect he owes to this Commonwealth, and the esteem he bears for his [own] nation." In circles close to the Consul, it had long been rumored (despite that official's protestation of keeping silence about the Abbé) that the priest had been dismissed from the French fleet in disgrace.

Nevertheless, neither the opening of the Catholic church, nor the rumor about its priest, brought out any untoward reaction from the non-Catholics of Boston and New England. In the month of December, some Bostonian, employing the common literary device of publishing supposed letters, used a French name to set forth his own appreciation of the new event:

A Roman Catholic Chapel is at length opened in this metropolis. This will be pleasing to many of our countrymen. The liberal part of the inhabitants (and to their honour there are but few who are not liberal) are highly pleased with it; and many of the Boston people attend on the worship of God, according to the mode prescribed by the Roman Church. I do not suppose, however, that any of them have thoughts of renouncing the religion of their fathers, to embrace new tenets . . . but attend, some from motives of curiosity, and others to evince that liberality which shines so conspicuous in the character of the Americans. . . .<sup>41</sup>

Up to the first of March, 1789, this was the only public manifestation of Boston's reaction to Father Poterie's foundation. Whatever may have been felt, nothing hostile or rude had been done or even published. This was a praiseworthy attempt to practice true toleration. There was even a practical exhibition on the part of non-Catholic Bostonians of an attitude greater than toleration. Many of them had answered the priest's repeated requests for donations to help his church.<sup>42</sup>

But there was a religious opposition: and the whispering

<sup>41</sup> Supposed letter of François de la E— to "Pierre"—a literary artifice, *Herald of Freedom*, Dec. 22, 1788.

<sup>42</sup> Impression gathered, first, from the actual facts of their contributing in April, and, secondly, from Belknap's attitude (see below). The latter, who attempted to hinder the contributions, is thereby a witness of their existence.



campaign against the Abbé allowed this opposition its chance. Among other results it made matters doubly difficult for the priest, by creating an obstacle to his obtaining money for the church. His debts had become, since January, an ever-increasing embarrassment. The annuity which he had confidently expected from his family, either directly or by way of Guadeloupe, had not arrived. The laborers who had worked on the church were demanding their pay, and the Abbé recognized that they "not only desired it, but were also in need of it."<sup>43</sup>

He further recognized that the enemies of his mission would take advantage of his financial difficulties with the workmen to prevent the success of his enterprise. He, therefore, again bethought himself of the Bishop of Quebec as a possible source of relief from his burden, and addressed to him an insinuating petition for aid.

Besides this, the Abbé likewise continued his regular appeal to Bostonians. For this purpose he had a form letter printed to send with a copy of his Pastoral to those citizens of Boston who might aid him. One of these letters, with the date March 3, 1789, written in, was sent to the Rev. Dr. Belknap:

Sir, you will readily discover, in the writing, which M. the Abbé de la Poterie has the honor to send you, here inclosed, the spirit and sentiments which animate him; and how weighty and very important the motives are by which he is actuated, since they have for their object, the Divine Worship, the greatest Glory of God and the Salvation and Advantage of Mankind. To interest your benevolence, and your goodness in his favour, needs only the trial which he desires you to make of him, with that generous heart and sensible soul, which is the distinguishing character of all good Christians.<sup>44</sup>

In what spirit Dr. Belknap received the request is not hard to learn. About March 3rd or 4th, he wrote to his friend Hazard in Philadelphia a letter of such a kind as to elicit the following reply:

<sup>43</sup> La Poterie to the Bishop of Quebec, March 1, 1789 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>44</sup> La Poterie to Belknap, Boston, March 3, 1789; cited in Merritt, *Sketches*, p. 180.

The Church of Rome has often felt the truth of the maxim that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," and I imagine will have a new proof of it in her attempt at an establishment in Boston. Superstition cannot acquire many votaries in a country which has been so completely illuminated by the gospel as New England, and the Abbé will probably find that, though the laudable catholicism of the day affords the most ample toleration and security to his sect, yet the people will not esteem it their duty to pay towards the support of a religion which they deem anti-Christian.

As a reflection of Dr. Belknap's own views, that letter is significant.

The adverse change in Boston sentiment is also marked by the fact that at the end of March, Dr. Belknap had that part of the letter published in a Boston paper. He also added to it his own elucidations, by continuing with the words, "and a church which fulminates her excommunications against those from whom she is soliciting charity. His 'authentic relick' of the Holy Cross will be regarded in the same light in which King Hezekiah regarded the brazen serpent of Moses, calling it 'Nehushtan,' a thing of no value." <sup>45</sup>

The same Dr. Belknap wrote to Hazard on April 20th, stating that he had published his remarks, together with the small addition of his own; and he added:

I believe it has done good. The Abbé has been about *begging*, the *holy week* not having sufficiently replenished his coffers [April 5 to April 12 was Holy Week that year]. Several gentlemen to whom he applied objected the absurdity of his expecting to receive offerings from those whom he had excommunicated. One told him, if he wanted money *as a man*, he had some at his service, but none for him *as a priest*. Another asked him whether, if any of our churches wanted repairing, he would assist. He answered, "Vat, help de heretic, O no." The reply then was, "If you can send us all to the D — 1, you must not expect any of our money." I know not what step he will venture on next. He came to my lecture

<sup>45</sup> 5 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, II, 110-111, Hazard to Belknap, March 14, 1789; *Massachusetts Centinel*, March 25, 1789.

last Friday evening, dressed in his toga, but I have never had any conversation with him, nor have I ever attended any of his exhibitions.<sup>46</sup>

It is, however, a fact that some Bostonians continued to contribute to the Catholic cause. For Dr. Belknap also related that on April 21st he had been told

that the Abbé had collected sixty dollars in his mendicant capacity. I was glad to hear it, for one reason; viz., that he had been employing some of our tradesmen in fitting up his chapel, buying candles and other necessities for celebrating his *officia*, and I hoped he would pay his debts, so as not to put them to the necessity of suing him, as such a step might possibly be construed into persecution. This day I am told that his clerk has decamped with the money, and left the poor Abbé to answer to his creditors. A writ has been served upon him, and probably others will be, as he certainly has run himself into debt to keep up the mummary of his profession. His chapel has answered the end of a puppet show to curious and idle folks, and the issue of the farce will prove a source of ridicule.<sup>47</sup>

Some ten days later, Dr. Belknap again wrote to Hazard: "We have lost the Abbé. He has gone, they say, to Maryland, to answer to Doctor Carroll, his Superior, for some misconduct. He is, I believe, but a speckled bird." <sup>48</sup>

Dr. Belknap knew many things about the Abbé: the very things that were also known to the French Consul, who had just heard that last bit of news.

### III

At the beginning of March, at the same time as the Abbé wrote to the Bishop of Quebec, he also wrote to his Superior, Father Carroll, enclosing a copy of the Pastoral Letter and of his other publications. When Father Carroll received these, he was immediately concerned about the good of religion in Bos-

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 116-117.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Belknap to Hazard, May 2, 1789, *ibid.*, 123.

ton. He at once made a report to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda.

M. la Poterie hardly had the faculties in his possession [Father Carroll wrote] when he published a printed letter, in the form of a Pastoral before Lent . . . [in it] there are things which would make the people of this country laugh, and other things which wouldn't bear their inspection. He knows very little English, and manifests a great spirit of independence.<sup>49</sup>

To say the least, the American Superior found the Boston priest "too assuming and [not very] prudent."<sup>50</sup>

The Superior also wrote to some person in Massachusetts about the matter, and only after receiving his reply did he send a letter to Father La Poterie, dated April 3rd. In it he declared that the Pastoral contained "passages highly improper for publication in this country and of a tendency to alienate from our religion and disgust the minds of our Protestant brethren." Father Carroll also declared that he had complaints of the Abbé's conduct "from one of the principal persons of the State of Massachusetts. . . . Amongst other things it is said, you have rendered our Religion most execrable to the people of Boston and have even exasperated the Legislature against it." The Superior was likewise displeased that Father La Poterie had informed the public of the difference between him and the French Consul. He told the Boston priest that he shouldn't have used the title Prothonotary, etc.: "you would hardly do anything more offensive to the Govts of America [he warned him], for it will be supposed . . . that you undertake to legalize certain acts in virtue of a foreign authority." He objected also to Father La Poterie's praying publicly for the King of France, because, he said, "it will be concluded that your congregation considers him entitled to some authority over them. . . . And you have moreover furnished ample matter of ridicule by . . . your exclusion of those from our communion, who *by witchcraft prevent the use of marriage*. . . ."

<sup>49</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, March 14, 1789 (*Arch. Prop. Fid., Scrit. Refer., America Cent.*, III, fol. 95).

<sup>50</sup> Father Carroll to Father Plowden, March 19, 1789 (*Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 20).



He then informed the Abbé that he had appointed the Rev. Mr. O'Brien of New York to investigate church affairs in Boston, and 'if he finds it necessary, to revoke the Abbé's faculties.'

I write to you with great plainness agreeable to your desire; & think it best for us both. I request you to print nothing more for the present. . . .<sup>51</sup>

In the first draft of this passage, Father Carroll had written:

I therefore must suspend your powers of administering the Sacraments, till you procure me from your diocesan Bishop a certificate duly authenticated of your good conduct, & of permission for you to be employed out of his diocese. I had prepared a long list of the improprieties in your pastoral ordinance & the *prône de paroisse*; but I forbear sending it at present.

This passage was not contained in the actual letter. In its place was inserted the notice of giving the matter to Father O'Brien, of New York, for investigation. In New York, Father O'Brien took up the matter, and on April 19th sent a letter to Father La Poterie, and another to the French Consul at Boston.

Father Carroll's delay in writing to the Abbé allowed the latter to celebrate Holy Week and Easter (April 12th) and the Octave, as he had planned in his Pastoral.<sup>52</sup> He could not have received the Superior's letter until Good Friday at the earliest, and probably told the congregation (or the wardens) on the Octave of Easter that he was going to Baltimore to see Father Carroll.<sup>53</sup>

On the Wednesday following, a writ was served upon him for non-payment of the debts. He left the city immediately (April 22nd), evidently to escape the writ and to make explanation in person to the Superior. He also stated that he went to ask him for aid in money. Because of Father O'Brien's delay in handling his part of the investigation in New York, the

<sup>51</sup> Father Carroll to La Poterie, April 3, 1789 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, draft).

<sup>52</sup> On Holy Saturday the Abbé solemnly administered the Sacrament of Baptism, not to forty persons, as he had advertised, but to five. The first of these was Mary Gardner, the wife of Patrick Campbell (Register of Holy Cross Church, I, 1, *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>53</sup> Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, p. 312.

Abbé did not receive the Vicar's summons before his departure.

At the moment when he left Boston the situation here is reflected in an item which the Abbé probably gave to the *Herald of Freedom* to be published after he left:

To the Publick:

As the absence of the ABBE DE LA POTERIE has given many malicious persons an opportunity of scandalizing him, and circulating reports much to his prejudice, the Publick may be assured that he has not left this town from fear of being seized for debt, but merely on business relative to his mission. His journey was no secret, he notified his intentions to the Church previous to his departure.<sup>54</sup>

Father Carroll found the Abbé a man "about thirty-five years of age, rather small in stature and of good appearance, not wanting in talent, well-versed in ecclesiastical matters, principally in the rites and ceremonies of the Church."<sup>55</sup> He also found the Abbé sufficiently docile, for the latter promised to omit praying for the King of France in public, and probably also to cease naming the Consul in the service and praying for his conversion. Nevertheless, the Superior ordered the priest to report to Father O'Brien in New York, and probably in the letter to his Vicar informed him of some matters favorable to the Abbé. Shortly afterwards, he received from Father O'Brien a report on the Abbé's case and certain other evidence very damaging to his reputation. It was then that the Superior sent word to Father O'Brien to suspend the Abbé's faculties.

In due course Father La Poterie, having returned to Boston, summoned a special meeting of the congregation, to hear his report of the visit to Father Carroll and of his failure to obtain any financial help in liquidating the debt. The congregation thereupon

appointed a committee, composed of Messrs. Baury, Jutau and Magnier to examine into the debts he had contracted, as well as for his own support, as what regarded the establishment of the Catholic Chapel. That committee consented to pay all

<sup>54</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, April 24, 1789.

<sup>55</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, July 13, 1789 (*Guilday Transcripts*).

the debts, and to make the necessary arrangements according to the list and statement to be laid before the said committee by the Abbé. . . .

The receipts and liquidations were settled by the resolves of many "responsible" members of [the] Congregation, viz: Messrs. Baury, Masson, Duggan, Julien, Jutau, and several others. It was resolved that all debts contracted by M. La Abbé [*sic*] should be discharged in one year from the afore-said date.

In consequence the estimate of the debts was lodged with Mr. Jutau, and a copy of the whole proceedings was transcribed into page 13 of the Church Register, under date of May 31st. The estimate of the debts totals £86/2/10.

Meanwhile, the matter of the Abbé's dismissal moved rapidly to its inevitable conclusion. Although he had passed through New York on his return from Baltimore, he had avoided Father O'Brien. But he had been back in Boston hardly a week when the Vicar sent word from New York City suspending him from his priestly functions. The letter was in French, and probably was addressed to M. Baury. In part, it ran:

Since I know no one in Boston in whom I can place my confidence, and having been informed by Mr. Barret of your honesty and your zeal for both your country and your religion, I take the liberty of sending you a suspension and interdict for him, which I beg you to have passed on to him by some trustworthy person, and in such wise that he will not suspect your having been charged with it. I forward the sentence to you unsealed, so that you can read it, and you are requested to have it communicated to him in the same state, so that he cannot make any pretence of not having received it. . . .

If he should dare to continue to say Mass or to officiate in any manner whatsoever, I beg you to inform those of our congregation whom you know, that he has been interdicted and that they cannot be present at his services, under pain of excommunication.

I have the honor, etc. . . .

New York, May 20.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Bishop Fenwick's notes (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*): Father Finotti, *Bibliographia Catholica Americana* (New York, 1872), p. 224, dates this letter as May 29, 1789, which seems much the more probable date.

This was but one of several letters of the same tenor, sent to Boston at that time by Father O'Brien. Father La Poterie, despite the receipt of the suspension, refused to obey it. His own statement of the dénouement was later given to the public through the newspaper.

This O'Brien [he asserted] has written to different residents in this town, in June last, particularly to the Hon. Consul of France, Mrs. Price, and Mr. English, a worthy merchant deserving of general esteem, the most abominable letters, filled with atrocious falsities against Mr. Abbé. . . . These infamous and injurious letters contain charges of robbery and several flagrant crimes. . . . The villainous letters of O'Brien have been read in the church, to the great scandal of all the congregation by Captain Freeman, according to the orders of Mr. Baury de Bellrive.<sup>57</sup>

Father La Poterie's last recorded baptism was dated June 7, 1789.

Besides the factors already mentioned as entering into the story of his dismissal from Boston, there was also another, which is of some moment. It has to do with the attitude of one or several representative members of the congregation, before the news of the priest's suspension arrived in Boston. These individuals had received, through the Archbishop of Paris, several articles which they had sent for, and the Archbishop's own picture. At the same time they also received word from that prelate

that the Abbé Poterie was not a clergyman proper for the ministry; that [the Archbishop] had known him at Paris, and, in consequence of impropriety of conduct, had been under the painful necessity of withdrawing his faculties from him.<sup>58</sup>

This intelligence greatly surprised the Catholics of Boston.

<sup>57</sup> La Poterie, "To the Public," *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 15, 1790.

<sup>58</sup> Bishop Fenwick, *Memoirs*, p. 12 (ms. in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*). Up to this point the incident has been known and printed, first by the (Boston) *Catholic Observer* (1847); and from that by B. U. Campbell in the *U.S. Catholic Magazine*, VIII (1849), 102-103; and then by J. G. Shea, in *The Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 314-315. It also appeared in Father Finotti, *Bibliographia Catholica Americana*, p. 224. These writers found difficulty in fitting the incident into the rest of their explanation.



. . . It was also the more disagreeable, as they knew the scarcity of Priests in this country, and how difficult it would be for them to obtain another, at this time, if La Poterie were to be withdrawn from them. They concluded, therefore, to say nothing of the Archbishop's letter, and to wait until something should transpire, which might render the publication thereof necessary.<sup>59</sup>

It is difficult to date the arrival in Boston of the letter from the Archbishop of Paris, and consequently to fix the duration of this painful period in the story of the Boston church. The incident itself has, however, the value of illustrating how eagerly the Boston Catholics desired to have a priest among them.

#### IV

After Father La Poterie was suspended here, he bethought himself of a scheme to avoid the consequences. He tried to start a schism. Evidently at his instigation a group of the Catholics of Boston held a meeting in which they drew up a petition to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, asking that New England be constituted a separate Vicariate Apostolic and that Father La Poterie be put at its head. The priest forwarded this document to Rome, together with a letter of his own. This packet was either not received at Rome or passed over there. That it contained, as arguments, some aspersions on the Jesuits is almost certain, for a second letter, sent from here six months afterwards, is full of that subject.<sup>60</sup>

There is a probability that, in this first letter, the Abbé repeated what he wrote to the Bishop of Quebec, about the Jesuits' plan to revive their order here under the title of "the American clergy," and about the consequent necessity of erecting New England into a separate Vicariate. For these purposes he also probably employed as an additional argument the charge of their unpopularity here.

[The American] Congress . . . by reason of a secret aversion which is prevalent in the United States against the Roman re-

<sup>59</sup> Bishop Fenwick, *Memoirs*, pp. 12 and 36.

<sup>60</sup> La Poterie to Propaganda, Jan. 6, 1790 (*Guilday Transcripts*).

ligion, will inevitably take occasion of whatever appears in the American newspapers against the Jesuits, to alienate the people from our holy religion.

The Jesuits are so spoken against in the United States that they give occasion to turn the Pope and our holy religion into contempt and derision. All the unfavorable facts attributed to them give our enemies a very advantageous handle against us. The novelty of their preaching and principles menaces this infant church of Jesus Christ with the most terrible and inevitable storms [of opposition].

It suffices that I point out to you, Msgr., the brochure from Dublin ("Account of the roman catholic mission in North America" printed in Dublin by P. Byrne [*sic*]. The title will enable you to procure it) that I may not be suspected of being opposed to the Jesuits without good reason, etc. etc. . . .

At Philadelphia, an entire congregation of Germans, folks otherwise quiet and very religious, have separated themselves entirely from him [Carroll] and built themselves a church, with no communication with him whatsoever. Not only have we followed their example, but all the congregations of the future will refuse to recognize a jurisdiction, humiliated by the evil character of him who exercises it. . . .<sup>61</sup>

So Father La Poterie wrote to the Cardinal Prefect on January 6, 1790, recalling what he wrote in June, 1789. All this dreadful fate awaited Catholic America, he asserted, unless "a division of ecclesiastical authority is instituted and he is given the powers of Vicar Apostolic." This typified the revengeful spirit of the man at that time. It is known that, a few days before July 13, 1789, he wrote a letter to Father Carroll from New York in which he "solemnly caricatured him with insolent and outrageous declarations."<sup>62</sup>

The American Superior told Propaganda:

The French priest whose faculties I was forced to suspend, goes about spreading the usual outcry against me and others, saying that under the pretext of maintaining and propagating

<sup>61</sup> Deduced from La Poterie to Propaganda, Jan. 6, 1790, which recalled his letter to the same of June, 1789.

<sup>62</sup> Father Carroll to Propaganda, July 13, 1789.

religion, we have no other purpose in view than reviving the Company [of Jesus] and other calumnies. As this man is very insinuating, clever, and indefatigable in his intrigues, it is probable that these assertions of his may get to Rome, where he pretends to have many friends and protectors. . . .<sup>63</sup>

This phase of the situation had its sequel the following year.

There is good reason to believe that the Abbé had taken up with this anti-Jesuit pretext for opposing the Superior's authority while he was in Philadelphia in early May. He could have become acquainted there with the false and calumnious pamphlet which he mentioned in his letter to the Cardinal. It was written against the Jesuits in America by an Irish priest who had spent some time in Maryland a year or two previously.<sup>64</sup> The pamphlet had repeated former attacks on the Jesuits in general. In particular, it claimed that these missionaries had made no single effort of consequence to extend their activities beyond the State of Maryland, although they ruled the largest mission field ever confided to one ecclesiastical Superior. The pamphlet also violently denounced the Rev. William O'Brien, pastor of New York.

It also set forth some Philadelphia Germans' resentment against Father Carroll and the Jesuits. Father La Poterie himself had passed through Philadelphia just after those Germans had made their dangerous move of electing their own pastor as against Father Carroll's superior jurisdiction. Father La Poterie made much of these facts in his second letter to the Cardinal Prefect and may well have written about them in his first letter also.

Whatever the occasion of Father La Poterie's method of creating and justifying a schism like the German one in Philadelphia, his plan was a failure. After his suspension, too, he likewise tried out a plan to support himself by teaching, in accord with the project which he had broached in the previous

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, July 12, 1789.

<sup>64</sup> "The Present State of the Catholic Missions conducted by the Ex-Jesuits in North America," written by the Rev. Patrick Smyth, Dublin, 1788 (?). It was available in Philadelphia in the early months of 1789 (*Guilday, Life of Rev. John Carroll*, p. 312).

January. This plan likewise was a failure. On July 8, 1789, the Abbé left Boston for New York, and went from there to Quebec. (Perhaps he had waited in Boston for the receipt of his annuity, long overdue, and payable again on June 24th.)

It must have been shortly before October 3, 1789, that Father Carroll finally knew the truth about the Abbé. On that date he wrote to Father Plowden:

The Abbé de la Poterie . . . proves to have been a most infamous character, as appears by a certificate sent to me from the Vicar-General of the Diocese of Blois. Luckily La Poterie had been detected in some misconduct before and was discharged from Boston without having committed very flagrant scandals there.<sup>65</sup>

The story of the previous seven months is unpleasant reading for a Catholic. The small number of Catholics attending the services is almost unbelievable. Even in the diminutive ex-Congregational church on School Street, there was still room for non-Catholics. Few, if any, of the newly arrived Irish attended Father Poterie's services; and of the Irish who had been long resident here, only those named in the following story went to Mass in the new church. And these made up but a pitifully small part of the number of those who had emigrated to Massachusetts in the previous generation.

It would have been a much easier and certainly a happier task to describe beginnings of a less unpromising nature. We could wish that the founder of the Boston church had been a man of saintly character, whose virtues, aided by the divine blessing, drew about himself a fervent and united flock of French and Irish Catholics. We could wish that Father Thayer had come when he was expected, and been the founder of this church.

<sup>65</sup> *Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 23: . . . monumenta quaedam authentica . . . transmissa fuissent: ex quibus illud constaret virum, omnibus contra fidem et mores vitiis notatum, ex *pluribus* in Gallia Seminariis et aliis locis ejectum, multas Europae provincias, fraudibus plenum, peragravies. Haec authenticis literis consignata a reverendo viro Dom. de la Blancherie (nisi per lapsum memoriae nomine fallor) Vicario Generali Episcopi Blesensis in Americam transmissa sunt. . . . (Father Carroll to Cardinal Antonelli, July 30, 1790). The Vicar-General's right name was Blandinière.



Nevertheless, we should not allow the sad facts about the actual founder to obscure the equally true, but inspiring, facts about its faithful pioneer members and its reverend and prudent Superior. The former had manifested an indescribable eagerness to have a priest among them, and poor though they were, for the most part, made many remarkable sacrifices to support him and to furnish their place of divine worship. The Superior, on his side, shared their hopes and desires. He had solicitously coöperated, wisely advised, and prudently ruled, and then, only when religion itself was being injured, saved it from further damage by resolutely prohibiting. He, too, had been profoundly saddened at the gross deception practiced upon both the church and himself. The Papal Nuncio at Paris, who was deeply affected at the scandal of the Poterie incident, viewed it, nevertheless, as one of "those storms which the Providence of God, from time to time, permits to reanimate the zeal and the vigilance of the Pilots." <sup>66</sup>

Nor should there be forgotten the kindly charity of some among the non-Catholic Bostonians who not only made a place of worship available, and even aided its furnishings by their contributions, but also refused to take advantage of their Catholic fellow citizens' difficulties and embarrassment.

The Providence of God would, in its own good time, produce virtue, and harmony, and growth.

<sup>66</sup> Father Carroll, *Letter-Book*, II, 267 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

## CHAPTER II

### DIFFICULTIES AND DIVISION (1789-1791)

#### I

FATHER THAYER was not even destined to become Boston's second resident priest. In mid-March, 1789, when Father Carroll first learned of Father La Poterie's injudicious conduct in Boston, he wrote to Father Thayer, inviting him specifically to repair to Boston. This letter was received by the young American convert in early May, in London, and although it told him of the opposition that awaited him in his native city, it determined him to take up there the work for which he had so long prepared himself. He was already engaged in a special service which had powerfully attracted his attention. Some time previously, he had undertaken, with the approval of Bishop Talbot, to give temporary assistance to a very zealous priest working in Southwark; and in the course of his ministry there he had established two schools for poor boys and girls "where they might be perfectly instructed in the Catholic faith,"<sup>1</sup> and in aid of these schools he had organized "the charitable Society for the Education of poor children born of Catholic parents."<sup>2</sup>

So deeply interested was he in these labors that, even after receiving Father Carroll's letter, the American priest spent nearly two months in winding up his affairs in London. He left that city for Paris only on June 14, 1789, and then — for unknown reasons — lingered some time in other parts of France.<sup>3</sup>

Howsoever necessary in Father Thayer's mind, these delays were unfortunate for the little flock in Boston. Had the mis-

<sup>1</sup> Father Nagot, *Conversions Remarquables* (2nd ed.: Paris, 1790).

<sup>2</sup> Summary of part of Father Nagot's letter in memoir on *Father Thayer in Southwark*, by Rev. B. J. Bogan, of St. George's Cathedral, Southwark (in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>3</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, July 27, 1790; letter of Father Nagot, Sept. 20, 1790.

sionary set out for his native city as soon as he received the Superior's letter, he might have arrived in Boston by July. As a matter of fact, he did not arrive there until the following January. He even neglected to answer Father Carroll's letter, and thus added to the latter's difficulties in providing for the unhappy church in Boston.

The Superior himself narrated this part of its story:

After La Poterie's departure, Mr. Campbell wrote to me stating their great distress for want of [priestly] assistance, without which he feared ye congregation would be disbanded. . . . And soon after[wards] Mr. Baury requested, in behalf of ye cong'n. to have Mr. Rousselet, whom they had seen, heard and approved.

Bishop Carroll, who had not heard from Father Thayer and "had almost despaired of [his] coming, could not therefore let ye little beginnings at Boston be defeated."<sup>4</sup> He thereupon transmitted the Boston offer to a Father Rousselet, who at the moment was in Philadelphia. No doubt, he explained to him at that time the general status of the Catholics in the Puritan town, setting forth their vain anticipation of Father Thayer's coming and the damage already done to religion by Father La Poterie's ill-fated sojourn among them. In due time he received from Father Rousselet a favorable response, and on August 31st wrote him as follows:

. . . I am exceedingly pleased at your determination to proceed to Boston. I know very well that you will meet with difficulties, but all first settlements have such; and I not only pray but likewise have a great assurance that you will live to see, not only a comfortable situation for yourself, but likewise feel a great consolation in the establishment of a flourishing congregation. May the blessing of God be with you.<sup>5</sup>

Thus came to Boston its second resident priest. He arrived most probably in early September and took up residence in the house at 23 Union Street, provided by the congregation. His

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 25, 1790. All Carroll-Thayer correspondence is in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>5</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 2, 1791.

full name was Louis de Rousselet.<sup>6</sup> Like his predecessor, he was French, and like him also, as was later discovered, he had been suspended from the active exercise of his ministry in his home land. He had left France about the year 1782,<sup>7</sup> and probably had gone to Demerara in Dutch Guiana, where some members of the Rousselet family lived and where at least one of them was then occupying an official position. Some time in the early part of the year 1789 he came to Boston, where one of the Demerara Rousselets, a certain Nicholas, had already taken up residence a few years previously. At the moment when the priest was in Boston, that relative was in Portsmouth, and the Abbé de la Poterie had charge of the Boston congregation. Father Rousselet, however, officiated in Boston at least on one occasion, and evidently pleased the members of the church. At that time, in view of Father Thayer's anticipated arrival and the small number of the Catholics, there was no special reason for Father Rousselet's remaining in Boston; so, when his relative removed to Philadelphia, the priest also went with him. It was there that Father Carroll's letter found him, with the invitation to proceed to Boston.<sup>8</sup>

He came here by way of New York, where he obtained from M. La Forest, the French Vice-Consul-General, a letter of recommendation to M. de L'Etombe at Boston. This he did, evidently on the advice of Father Carroll, to avoid his predecessor's unpleasant experience with the Boston Consul. When the priest presented his letter, however, that official felt obliged to answer him that he had "no authority to accredit him here in the King's name, that [the priest] would have to make a place for himself in this city" without much official help.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 25, 1790.

<sup>7</sup> *Arch. Marine, Corr. Cons., Philadelphia*, vol. 2, fol. 394.

<sup>8</sup> Letter of Thomas Walley, in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 45. He had been in South America. "Nicholas Rousselet, late a planter of Demerara, and a subject of the United States of the Netherlands," came to Boston about May, 1783, and lived there as a merchant and auctioneer. He was naturalized in 1784, and continued in business in Boston until March 27, 1787, when he married a Portsmouth woman and took up residence in that city. Being in ill health, he went for some time to Philadelphia, and, after recovering, returned to Portsmouth in 1796. He was later made U.S. Consul in Demerara.

<sup>9</sup> L'Etombe to La Luzerne, *Arch. Nat., Corr. Cons., Boston*, vol. 2, fols. 384-385.



So the Consul explained his position to his Home Government. He went on to say:

The Protestant Ministers, Presbyterians, Baptists and Anglicans, do not yet look upon this establishment with benevolent eye. It should have been founded by someone well-known [to the public] and by a warden less turbulent than M. Baury de Bellerive. Before the [American] Revolution, people here used to burn the Pope's effigy every 5th of November. This custom did not prepare the popular mind [to welcome Popery] and it is of too recent memory for the French Consul to be able to change public opinion [in this regard].<sup>10</sup>

The priest likewise found little, if any, favor in the eyes of the Boston populace. By the time of his coming here, the news of the French Revolution had begun to trickle across the ocean and found sympathetic readers in Boston. Samples of the popular reaction here are found in some communications to the *Massachusetts Centinel*.

They manifested their joy at the revolutionaries' attacks on Papal power, revenue, property, and authority in France.<sup>11</sup> One item announced the appointment of Father Carroll to the Bishopric of Baltimore as a vain attempt by Rome to offset its losses in Europe.<sup>12</sup>

## II

The Catholic congregation here had fallen off in numbers since the Abbé de la Poterie's time. It had as members in December, 1789, only "one American [Daniel English]; three or four French folk, and a score of poor Irish."<sup>13</sup> That fact of itself would be a source of difficulty for Father Rousselet; one wonders how he could even support himself.

A more immediate occasion of difficulty was the return of the Abbé de la Poterie from Quebec, where he had failed to find employment. He was clearly prepared to cause trouble by

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*      <sup>11</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, Oct. 7, Nov. 14, 1789.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1789.

<sup>13</sup> L'Etombe to La Luzerne, Dec. 2, 1789 (*Arch. Nat., Corr. Cons., Boston*, vol. 2, fols. 384-385).

seeking to effect a schism in the Boston congregation, as he had vainly tried before his departure in July; for he brought with him an incendiary pamphlet, directed against the Jesuits in general, and Father Carroll in particular. It was entitled *The Resurrection of Laurent Ricci; or a true and exact History of the Jesuits*, and it was dedicated "To the New Laurent Ricci in America, the Reverend Father John Carroll, Superior of the Jesuits in the United States; also to the Friar-Monk-Inquisitor, William O'Brien (one of his many contrivors to set his Engines at Work, without interfering visibly himself)." <sup>14</sup>

The sub-title of this twenty-eight-page pamphlet clearly indicated its purpose:

A well-meant caution to the United States of America on the Danger of admitting that turbulent Body of Men, called Jesuits, among them; to all Christian Congregations of the United States of America, particularly Roman Catholics. A true and exact history of the Jesuit Refugees, residing in Maryland and Philadelphia.

However, only some four sentences were directly concerned with the "Acts and Ambitions" of the American Jesuits, who were said to

have occasioned and been guilty of the most shocking offences in order to remove [the foreign ecclesiastics who opened chapels in New York and Boston] under various pretences and appoint others in their room. . . . At Boston, they have lately given a great deal of trouble and uneasiness to the French secular Priest, who had sacrificed his Fortune-Means, and his whole zeal for the august Ceremonies of that holy Religion, and when through the Liberality of the Bostonians, his Labours were going to be crowned with Success by the peaceful Establishment of his Chapel, they thought proper to step into

<sup>14</sup> The Very Rev. Lawrence Ricci was General of the Jesuits at the time of their suppression. The pamphlet which La Poterie had put on sale in Providence on Dec. 12th had the imprint *Philadelphia*. This was probably correct, although there are reasons for suspecting that the pamphlet had been printed in Boston, even perhaps before La Poterie's departure in July. La Poterie probably hoped to find at Boston on his arrival both an answer from the Congregation de Propaganda Fide to his letter of July 5th; and also his annuity, due on Dec. 25th.

his Place, by sending to supplant him a sly and artful Subject,  
— The Slave of Jesuitism.

In a letter to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, to which La Poterie sent the pamphlet, he described himself as

A friend of America, and a zealous partisan of the Roman Catholic Religion and of those who profess it in America; one who, in diverse, private, and familiar conversations with honest Roman Catholics, both French and of other nationalities, about the establishment of the Roman Church in the United States, learned that many people didn't understand what was meant by the Body of Jesuits, who set themselves up as teachers and masters of our Religion..

The advertisement of this pamphlet appeared in the *Herald of Freedom* for December 15, 1789, as on sale at the Boston Bookstore, 58 Cornhill. In the same issue of *The Herald* there was a statement by the Abbé about the debts which he had contracted in Boston and the provisions made for their settlement in May before he left the city. He declared his intention of returning to Europe on the first of February next.

Nevertheless, such was not his real intention. He was, in fact, preparing a place for himself in Boston. For this purpose, he "made known everywhere that he had been exceptionally well-received [in Canada, by the Bishop of Quebec] and all [his] respectable clergy; that he would have received [that bishop's approval] for his whole diocese, if the laws of Canada didn't prevent this, as he was a French ecclesiastic. . . ." Father Rousselet, who perceived the underlying purpose of this advertising on the Abbé's part, deemed it necessary to write to Quebec for the truth of the matter.<sup>15</sup>

The Abbé was also involved in the first known public disturbance in the Catholic Church in Boston since its beginning. On Christmas Eve certain persons were guilty of disturbing the devotions in the church. They were not of the decent part of the populace; *The Centinel* of December 26th spoke

<sup>15</sup> Father Rousselet to Bishop of Quebec, Boston, Jan. 2, 1790 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

of their conduct as meeting "the detestation and resentment of every considerate citizen" — and avowing the wish "that the perpetrators may be brought to exemplary punishment for their misconduct." In the issue of December 30th, Father Rousselet presented his own reaction. His communication read:

Mr. Russell . . . The Catholic Congregation of the town of Boston, and their own Priest, request you very much to acquaint all the respectable Gentlemen and Ladies, who were pleased to attend their divine worship last Christmas-night, how sorry they are, for having been so unfortunate as to meet with so many troublesome people, who not only have given the greatest scandals, but have destroyed the greatest part of their pews — what is fully against that union and friendship, now in reign in all this continent.

He also announced that on the following Christmas, no services would be held at midnight: "by that care, certainly no confusion at all will take place."

The disorder involved, if it did not begin with, the Abbé de la Poterie, who attempted to intrude himself as an active participant in the service and who was thereupon forbidden by Father Rousselet. The former then proceeded to assail his successor in the public press "with a richness of vituperation which might have aroused the envy of the most polemical of Puritan divines of the eighteenth century."<sup>16</sup> He referred to him as

this wordy and tedious Rosselet, this very poor orator and bad preacher, not able to persuade a single proselyte, but made to scare everyone by his rough speech and insupportable accent, and by his eyes dark and hollow, this discordant and melancholy singer, in a word this *jesuit*, by mission, by conduct, by manners, by rule and principle.<sup>17</sup>

The unfortunate Abbé La Poterie, caught in the bonds both of poverty which he shamelessly made public and of suspension which he could not hide, tried various methods of obtaining relief. He advertised again his willingness to teach French

<sup>16</sup> Merritt, *Sketches*, p. 187.      <sup>17</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 8, 1790.



and other foreign languages. He also sought to obtain the good will of the French Consul, whom he addressed in a most abject and insinuating letter, and whom he covered with fulsome praise in the press. He even tried his wiles on Father Thayer, who had just arrived in Boston, praising the latter's "glorious designs," offering obedience to him "in the character of a good pastor," humbly praying him to gain "the honor of bringing back to the fold a wandering sheep"; but all this "provided that Mr. Thayer is not one of the Rev. Father Carroll's many contrivers, etc." <sup>18</sup>

All his manoeuvres profited him nothing. They brought only a sarcastically devastating reply about his deserts and a public repudiation by "the Catholic congregation." <sup>19</sup> A renewal of his plea against the Jesuits, sent together with his inflammatory pamphlet to the Propaganda in Rome on January 6, 1790, was also destined to similar treatment, but by the time that Congregation's reply arrived in Boston, the Abbé had fled. <sup>20</sup>

On the receipt of Father La Poterie's communication, the Cardinal Prefect wrote at once to the Nuncio at Paris <sup>21</sup> "to obtain information from the Archbishop of Paris, about this person, what his beliefs are, how long and why he is in America, etc." On July 28th the Cardinal Secretary again wrote to the Nuncio at Paris acknowledging receipt of the information previously requested, and adding, "This Monsieur de la Poterie has started a schism in Boston, by establishing there a church independent of the legitimate Bishop. . . ." <sup>22</sup> He also wrote to Father La Poterie, saying:

I am very concerned that you, a private individual, a foreigner, and a newcomer to America, ignorant even of its language, should have insulted the excellent priest, John Carroll,

<sup>18</sup> Notes by Bishop Fenwick, *Boston Dioc. Arch.*; *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 8. 12 (perhaps by Thayer), 15, 1790.

<sup>19</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, Jan. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Father Thorpe to Bishop Carroll, Rome, July 7, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); *Arch. S. C. Prop. Fide, Scrit. Refer.*, *Am. Cent.*, II, 370.

<sup>21</sup> *Arch. Prop.*, *Lettere*, vol. 258, fol. 220, May 26, 1790.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, fols. 422-426, extract.

whom the Apostolic See has appointed Bishop of Baltimore, pastor of all the Catholics in the United States, and the guide of souls, yours included; and whose good reputation and meritorious deeds for the Catholic religion you dare vilify.

I have found out, from the testimony of many persons in France what kind of person you are, in what diocese in France you were born, and in what places you have exercised your ministry; and I wish you to know that you have no faculties for the sacred ministry anywhere in the United States, unless the Bishop of Baltimore consents to grant them, after you have apologized to him. . . . The other matters of which you write me so profusely need no answer. If you would take my advice, leave America and return to France. And may God guide you to a better state of mind and long preserve you.<sup>23</sup>

Long before the Cardinal's letter arrived in America, La Poterie had left this country, never to return.<sup>24</sup>

### III

The long-expected Father Thayer arrived in America at Baltimore on December 16, 1789. After a few days in that city he started north on his way to Boston, traveling with Bishop Carroll as far as Philadelphia. During their ten or so days together, the Bishop must have observed the young priest very

<sup>23</sup> *Arch. Prop. Lettere*, vol. 258, fol. 496.

<sup>24</sup> In after life, he went at first from bad to worse. In 1791 he is found in his native parish of St. Clement in Craon, where he took the constitutional oath. In 1793 he was at Martinique, "curé de République Ville," a revolutionary patriot, whose vehement speeches aroused the courage of the troops, but whose conduct was not exempt from reproaches. On March 25, 1794, he was made prisoner by the victorious English, and sent with others to France, where he again professed himself as an ardent supporter of the Revolution.

Nevertheless, after the Concordat, he is found on service, and enjoying faculties as a Catholic priest in good standing. From 1804 to 1806 he served in the Diocese of Versailles; in 1810 and 1811 he had a position as curé in the Diocese of Soissons; from 1818 onward he spent a couple of years in each of the dioceses of Dijon, Langres, and Meaux, and in 1824-1825, he was curé in a small village near his ancestral base of Château-Gontiers. There is a story which gives some probability to his having returned to the Church even as early as 1797. In any case he did repent of his schism. Evidence for above to be found in copies of numerous documents from French archives in Boston Diocesan Archives.

carefully. He knew his previous history from the letters that he had received about him during the preceding five years. As to the young priest's character, however, he had been unable to form a definite judgment, for these letters carried quite contradictory opinions.<sup>25</sup>

All agreed that he had grandiose apostolic ideas and had done good work in London: but some wondered why he had been so tardy in starting for Boston, and others questioned the single-mindedness of his purpose. On the whole, Bishop Carroll's correspondents were frankly suspicious as to Father Thayer's merits and future.

Father Thayer, on his side, brimful of his successes in London, eager to begin work in Boston, and willing to meet and overcome bitter opposition there, yet reticent about explaining his long delay in setting out for this mission, left on Bishop Carroll a not too favorable impression. In fact, personal observation made the Bishop ready to credit certain complaints later made against the new missionary in Boston, of an overgreat eagerness for authority.<sup>26</sup>

Father Thayer, having spent at least a day in New York on his way, arrived in Boston on Saturday, January 2, 1790.<sup>27</sup> Without doubt he called upon Father Rousselet at once, and arranged to say Mass privately the next day after his arrival. He also had to look up a boarding place for himself, and found it at the house of the Irish warden, Patrick Campbell, on Water Street. A few days afterwards he wrote to Bishop Carroll, using the phrase "most flattering" to describe the attention which he received "from the Governor, from the Ministers, from my family, and, in fine, from all classes of people." He considered it as "an omen perhaps of good success, tho' I am prepared for and expect opposition." This was written to the Bishop on

<sup>25</sup> Bishop Carroll, *Letter-Book*, II, 267, 269 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 J 9 14).

<sup>26</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 25, 1790. It is probable that he requested the Bishop to make him ecclesiastical superior in New England. In this regard the Bishop could hardly have forgotten at least two associations of Father Thayer's name with the office of Bishop in America.

<sup>27</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, Jan. 6, 1790; Bentley, *Diary*, I, 135; *U.S. Cath. Mag.*, VIII (1848), 116. Jan. 4th may be a misprint.

January 6th. It was repeated in a letter written some months later to a friend in Paris:

I . . . have everywhere been received with the most flattering attention. My own relations expressed the greatest joy at my return. The Governor of the State, whose chaplain I formerly was, has promised to do all in his power to forward my views, and favour the work for which I have been sent to Boston. I have received nothing but kindness and attention from all the ministers of the town. Several of them have visited me and evinced a degree of cordiality which I had little reason to expect. The officers of the custom house have also carried their politeness so far as to be unwilling to take anything for the large boxes which I had procured from France and England, having looked upon their contents as things desired for sacred purposes.<sup>28</sup>

One of those ministers, the Rev. William Bentley, pastor of the Unitarian Church of Salem, reflected the earliest Boston reaction as curiosity. Noting in his *Diary* the arrival of Father Thayer, he added the comment: "The singularity of his conduct before his conversion has made this visit a subject of curious nature. It is supposed he has an American Mission, etc."<sup>29</sup>

Father Thayer's first public services were held on the Sunday following, that is, on January 10th.<sup>30</sup> Although the newspapers merely announced the fact, the priest's own statement about this service included the comment: "all flocked in crowds to hear me."<sup>31</sup> He was, however, unable to carry on continuously at this time (indeed, January 10th may have been his only public service then), because he was

only a fortnight in the town when it pleased Almighty God to afflict [him] with a sickness that kept [him] confined to [his] bed for more than a month. [It was rheumatism of the most severe and painful kind.] Indeed the danger appeared to [him]

<sup>28</sup> Father Thayer to Father Nagot, July 17, 1790, *U.S. Cath. Mag.*, VIII, 116.

<sup>29</sup> *Diary*, Jan. 7, I, 135.

<sup>30</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Jan. 11, 1790: "Yesterday the Rev. Mr. John Thayer . . . for the first time celebrated Divine Service in the Roman Catholic Church in this town." This I take to refer to public service.

<sup>31</sup> Letter to Father Nagot, July 17, 1790.



so serious that on one occasion [he] requested the Holy Viaticum [from Father Rousselet].<sup>32</sup>

Although the new priest was unwell for a month after his first public services, he was sufficiently recovered to take his share in the Lenten exercises that started on February 17th. As a consequence, on the Lenten Sundays the people had the consolation of two Masses; in general, their devotions were doubled in number, for each priest, besides saying Mass in the morning of Sunday, also conducted an afternoon service. Father Rousselet's was held at four o'clock and consisted of the well-known Vespers, Sermon, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Father Thayer preached at six, an hour which not only fitted the circumstances, but also served to draw some Protestants, for the latter could not be induced to leave their own afternoon services any earlier. Father Thayer also preached on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Even after Lent was over, the zealous missionary kept up his practice of preaching both on Sundays and twice during the week.

The new priest's presence in Boston and his zeal immediately brought an increase in the congregation. After his coming, some Irish began to attend church who had not done so previously, and to have their children baptized. Some of the children were one, two, or seven years of age, and one person was twenty-eight years old. For the first six months of 1790 the church book shows fifteen baptisms, twelve white and three negro. All of the white persons were Irish and eleven of them were baptized by Father Thayer.

The fact that he practically began his Boston career in Lent gave him an especially appropriate opportunity of emphasizing the penitential side of Catholicity, with which he was personally enamored. He made much of the fast and abstinence proper to the season. He even urged some of his clients to imitate him in the practice of the Discipline, and the use of penitential garments. Father Thayer was well enough to be on duty all of Lent. His colleague, however, was not so physically

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

favor'd, and apparently often let the American take the late Mass on Sundays. Sometimes he was even too unwell to observe the fast and abstinence laws completely; and he was made conscious of the fact by Father Thayer's presence and example.

The missionary's frequent preaching also set a pace for Father Rousselet. By early June the latter had taken a leaf out of his new companion's method-book by announcing in the public press a series of evening sermons of his own, during the octave of Corpus Christi.<sup>33</sup>

Father Thayer also busied himself in the spread of Catholic books of religion. Already, on February 20, 1790, that is, immediately after his recovery from illness, he had certain Catholic books placed on sale in Boston. They included

The last London Edition of *The Relation of the Rev. Mr. Thayer's Conversion to the Catholick Faith*, and a great variety of the Works of the greatest Catholic Divines, who have explained the doctrine or enforced the morality of their church. From these books, the curious reader, as well as the sincere seeker after truth, may draw ample matter of instruction and entertainment; and where things alleged against the Roman church by those who dissent from her are ably defended.<sup>34</sup>

Besides a two-volume English translation of Bishop Bossuet's *Variations of the Protestant Religion*, this Catholic library was composed chiefly of the works of the English Catholic, Bishop Challoner, recently deceased. Bishop Bossuet's book was, as is well known, written to serve the purpose of reconciling Protestants with Catholicism, and was altogether in line with Father Thayer's vital concern for the conversion of his fellow Americans.

The works of Bishop Challoner touched the whole range of controversy between English Catholics and non-Catholics, and furnished, at the same time, a complete source for study and

<sup>33</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, June 2, 1790; Bentley, *Diary*, I, 178.

<sup>34</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, Feb. 20, 1790. This advertisement appeared again on March 3, 1790; cf. Bentley, *Diary*, I, 166. The books undoubtedly included those obtained by Father Thayer in London.

practice of the spiritual life. As enumerated by Bentley, they included *The Grounds of Catholic Doctrine; A Short History of the Protestant Religion*, gathered out of the best Protestant writers; *A Papist Misrepresented and Represented, or a Two-fold Character of Popery*; *Grounds of the Old Religion*; *The City of God . . . , a History of the Church of God*; *The Douay Catechism*; *The Catholic Christian Instructed*; *The Garden of the Soul*; and *The Manual of Godly Prayers*.

It was from these books that the Catholics and some of the Protestants of Boston and New England were to obtain their knowledge about the old faith which the new missionary worked so zealously to spread.

#### IV

Even before he became ill, indeed within a week after his arrival, the American convert took means to effect his desire of managing the church of Boston alone. It was for this purpose that, on January 6th, he wrote to Bishop Carroll a summary of the church situation in the city, basing his plea chiefly on the argument of subsistence.

The Catholics are exceedingly few, not above fifty or sixty at most, and these very poor for the most part. I am positive they must have great difficulty to maintain a single priest, much less can they maintain two of us. Besides this, La Poterie (who is actually here and in poverty) has run the church so deeply in debt that it will be a long time before it will emerge from its present situation. I should, therefore, wish you to place Mr. Rousselet in another parish as soon as possible, as he will be in some measure useless here on account of his language. This seems to be his own desire, as he has expressed it to another person, tho' not to me and I suppose he will soon write to you on this head. I pray you to do this speedily.

Not long afterwards, he again wrote to Bishop Carroll along the same line.<sup>35</sup> In these first letters, he gave a picture not only of the small number and the poverty of the congregation,

<sup>35</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 6, 1790.

and the shortcomings of Father Rousselet, but also of his own excessive zeal, imprudence, and ambition. Particularly striking in the latter regard was his request

for an authentic paper in Latin . . . constituting me superior of the mission in New England [under Bishop Carroll, of course]. I suppose, Sir, you believe my intention so pure as not to wish this from desire of domination or superiority.

The Bishop's comment, endorsed on the letter, reads, "Complains of Rousselet — wishes him gone — solicits the superiority of the New England States." He later told Father Thayer himself, "I was not edified with your first letters asking superior authority and ridiculing [Father Rousselet's] pronunciation."<sup>36</sup>

In fine, Bishop Carroll was disappointed. He probably anticipated that Father Thayer would have great success in Boston with English-speaking Catholics, particularly the Irish, and that he would probably make some converts among American-born Protestants. The Bishop, therefore, who believed in the particular advantages of a priest's not living alone, had hoped that the enlarged Boston congregation would be well able to support both priests.

Both the Bishop and Father Rousselet recognized the truth of what Father Thayer emphasized: the present poverty and smallness of the congregation and the prospect of enlargement under the new priest. Father Rousselet had announced both to him and the Bishop that he would withdraw. But the Bishop, wishing to do justice to the French priest, who had gone to Boston on his invitation and who had been faithful in the work, was loath to accept his withdrawal, until at least some other desirable post for him was available. The consequent delay might also serve to reconcile the French party in Boston, and at the same time give Father Thayer the needed opportunity to win their favor.<sup>37</sup> But by March 16th the Bishop became particularly disturbed about the Boston situation.

He had just learned of what happened at the March "meeting of the full committee of the Church," which was probably

<sup>36</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 30, 1790.

<sup>37</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A H 2; *Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 26 and 27.



the first attended by Father Thayer. In it the American priest tried to have the French sign a document which seemed to them too great an assertion of his authority. They balked. In the course of the discussion the American emphasized his faculties as Missionary Apostolic, obtained from the Pope.<sup>38</sup>

The trouble began to crystallize into a racial difference between French and Irish: and the Bishop made constant exhortation that the Church in this country should be neither French nor Irish but American. Even though he now feared that any action on his part directing either priest to leave would cause an uprising (*une fermentation*), he set about accomplishing this purpose. It involved Father Thayer's temporary departure from Boston and Father Rousselet's employing the interim in preparation for his own permanent departure. The Bishop accordingly wrote to each priest in that sense (*ca.* March 20th). In his letter to Father Thayer, he let him understand that it would not be long before Father Rousselet would withdraw and the people would call the English-speaking priest.

The Bishop's letters arrived in Boston about Palm Sunday, which that year fell on March 28th. They brought out that uprising which the Bishop had foreseen. Father Rousselet, on the one hand, rescinded his resolve about leaving Boston at all. Whether this decision on his part resulted from pressure by the French or was merely a peevish resentment against Father Thayer is of little importance. The latter's reaction was manifest in a letter which he wrote to the Bishop. In this he emphasized the French disregard of episcopal authority and added some childish complaints against Father Rousselet. On the other hand, he pictured himself as quite docile to the Bishop, and preparing to make a public announcement on Easter of his proximate departure from Boston.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, the Boston congregation observed a troubled Easter Day (April 4th). From that time it was definitely divided into two factions.

The Irish did not want Father Thayer to leave; they were

<sup>38</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, April 30, and May 25, 1790; Bishop Carroll to Masson, April 30, 1790; Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, May 13, 1790.

<sup>39</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, April 20, May 25, 1790.

not eager to have Father Rousselet remain: so they began to stir themselves to prevent both events, and finally (*ca.* April 20th) wrote to Bishop Carroll informing him "that the *whole* [*sic!*] congregation was in the greatest disorder, from an apprehension that Mr. Thayer would leave them; and that they had always considered Mr. Thayer as designed to be their Pastor." <sup>40</sup>

The American's continued presence in Boston did not help the situation; nor his explanation to the people that his decision to leave was taken at the express orders of the Superior and that his absence would be only temporary. For he did not obey Bishop Carroll either promptly or completely. Only on receipt of a further letter from the Superior, on April 15th, did he even write to Salem to make arrangements for his visit there. Furthermore, after he had made plans to go to Salem, he still arranged not to be absent from Boston on Sundays. He put a notice in *The Centinel* of Saturday, April 24th, informing "the Town, That every Sunday at six o'clock in the evening (to begin from tomorrow) he intends preaching a Sermon at the Catholic Chapel in School Street."

Only on May 4th (Tuesday) did he appear in Salem. The town to which he then turned his eyes was an active industrial and commercial centre, supporting a population of 7,921, which made it the second largest town in the State. In its cosmopolitan population, there were many Irish, and some French, who would, Father Thayer believed, welcome a Catholic priest. In preparation for his visit there, he wrote to the Rev. Mr. William Bentley, who had been known to him from his youth and who was pastor of the East Church in Salem. He was a Unitarian of liberal views, a scholar and a gentleman, and was destined to play an important rôle in the beginnings and growth of the Church in Salem.

Father Thayer's first letter to Mr. Bentley informed the minister of his intention to visit Salem and to say Mass and preach there.

I would wish you to let me know the number of Catholics in the place, and whether I could among them, or in any Prot-

<sup>40</sup> Bishop Carroll to Masson, April 30.

estant family of your acquaintance, get a decent, quiet, cheap lodging. Is it possible, likewise to procure any large, decent place for the performance of my priestly functions? I address [myself] with freedom to you on this subject, as I know your elevation above the vulgar prejudices against Catholics, and the liberality of your way of thinking.<sup>41</sup>

Mr. Bentley answered the priest with a statement of his own desire

that every man enjoy his religion, not by toleration, but as the inalienable right of his nature. I communicated your letter to two of the Selectmen, & assure you of the fullest protection our internal police can give you.

As to Lodgings, should you call on me, I will give you all the information in my power, & we may then consult about the place of worship. As there are several religious denominations in the town, & the Catholics are without any outward distinction, I can only mention such as are within my acquaintance & probably only a small part, as the Catholics commonly have worshipped according to the rites and ceremonies of the English Church.

M. Frank, a Corsican, M. Peter Barrase, an Italian, Mad. Rue & her Sons, Wm. Dwire, lately removed to Beverly, an Irishman, Emanuel Chishull, a Portug., Mr. Battam, a Frenchman, Jo. & Jer. Longueray, Canadians.

You can, by a conversation with them inform yourself of the whole number in the place & vicinity.

On May 4th Father Thayer journeyed to Salem, and called upon Mr. Bentley, who received him kindly and invited him to stay the night. On the next day the minister went with the priest "to find the brethren of his communion, but we found but one able to maintain the Priest, & he had rather renounce his religion than incur the expense. The support, therefore, fell upon me, & consequently all the prejudice which can arise in illiberal minds on such an occasion."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Bentley Papers, American Antiquarian Society* (Worcester). See also Louis S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem* (Boston, 1890). This letter is dated April 15th, but there is reason to believe that its real date was a few days later.

<sup>42</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, I, 165.

Father Thayer had come "prepared with his ornaments, altar stone, & Mass books," and on Thursday morning, May 6th, he performed Divine service in Mr. Bentley's house. There were in attendance undoubtedly those Catholics whose names Bentley had first given to Father Thayer, and probably some others: Italians, Portuguese, French, French-Canadians, and Irish. "An Irish stranger" served that first Mass in Salem which was celebrated by a Puritan convert Catholic priest in the study of a Unitarian minister!

There is no other information regarding that extraordinary event. The newspapers of the time contain no mention of it, nor indeed of Father Thayer's presence in Salem on that occasion. Nor does the latter himself give any details. To Catholics of later days the identification of the exact place where that first Mass was said has been a subject of much interest.<sup>43</sup> Despite the tendency to place it in the Crowninshield house, still standing at 106 Essex Street, because that was Bentley's home for many years, there can be no doubt that the first Mass in Salem was said in the house of Widow Mary Elkins on Bow Street "opposite the Meeting." Bentley lived there at the time, and only removed to the Crowninshield house on March 1, 1791.<sup>44</sup>

On May 7th Father Thayer "prepared to say Mass as on the preceding morning. But as none of his devotees appeared, he called on me [it is Bentley who writes thus] to take the place of Responsor, which I declined." Bentley also records that on that Friday he went with Father Thayer to Beverly to see a mutual acquaintance, Rev. Mr. Oliver (minister of the Congregational Church there). He did this

as a mere amusement, that did not fail of success. The bigotry of Oliver, joined to an honest, but uninformed mind, opposed to the humor & insulting triumph of a Catholic who had gained no humility by his conversion & was a remarkable stranger to it before in his whole character, upon a new meeting, could not fail of effects entertaining to one of their old acquaintance. . . .

His own hospitality had evidently been put to the test.

<sup>43</sup> L. S. Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> *Diary*, I, 234, 235, 334, 221, 225.



Thayer [he wrote] wants that quality which could render his visits tolerable, the least sense that after a family has entertained him for a week, they have done him a favor. He left at two o'clock.<sup>45</sup>

It was clearly Father Thayer's intention to return to Salem again, for at his departure he left with Bentley a large number of Catholic books, articles of devotion, and his priestly vestments.<sup>46</sup>

In Boston the French, temporarily triumphant at Father Thayer's departure, were still uneasy. They in turn wrote a letter to Bishop Carroll, seeking Father Rousselet's continuation with them. Their letter was signed by Mamé Masson, their warden, just as the Irish letter bore the signature of Patrick Campbell. Father Carroll sent one reply to both groups.

If *harmony* and *subsistance* cannot be had, without my appointing one Pastor exclusively of the other, Mr. Rousselet must be nominated on account of prior residence, age, and his having been desired of me in the name of the congregation to send him to Boston. Before I make the appointment I must hear once more from Boston. . . .

I should have gone immediately to visit (the Congregation) & be acquainted with them individually; but I am under the necessity of proceeding abroad for my consecration; & many reasons of general utility to the American Church induce me to prefer Europe for that purpose. . . . I earnestly recommend the general welfare of the Catholic Church and myself in particular to the good prayers of them all, earnestly beseeching, that since it has pleased divine providence to unite all parts of the U.S. under one Episcopacy, all would lay aside national distinctions & attachments, and strive to form, not Irish, nor English, or French Congregations & Churches, but Catholic-American Congregations & Churches.<sup>47</sup>

The Bishop, after hearing from Boston again, made the appointment which he had foreshadowed.<sup>48</sup> The date of Father

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 165.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 165-166.

<sup>47</sup> Bishop Carroll to Masson and Campbell, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A H 3.

<sup>48</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, May 13, 1790; Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 25, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A D 6); cf. Father Rousselet to Father Thayer, June 22, 1790, and *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Researches*, IX (1892), 42.

Rousselet's appointment as sole pastor was June 1, 1790. In announcing this to the congregation, the Bishop declared, "I wish indeed that both [priests] could remain with you, but so that Mr. Thayer be subordinate to Mr. Rousselet." He wrote to Father Rousselet on the same date: "Here is the result of my reflection and resolution. I would have you remain in Boston, to act as the sole Pastor of that church, for which I enclose you full powers."<sup>49</sup>

The Superior's letter to Father Thayer, written at the same time, while continuing to the latter the permission to exercise all the functions of the ministry, accused him, among other things, of a want of conciliation and of docility.<sup>50</sup> It ordered him to establish himself in any place else in New England which he should choose.

The Bishop-elect then went to Europe for his consecration and left American affairs in the hands of the Vicars-General, Fathers Pelenz and Fleming. In Boston Father Thayer chose to interpret the Bishop's decision as not prohibiting his exercise of the ministry in Boston, and on Sunday, June 20th, celebrated Mass there "as usual." But as this action also involved his taking the collection, made during his Mass, strong objections were raised by the pastor. There is, however, some reason to believe that in a few days the two priests came to an amicable working basis, agreeing on the Bishop's original plan; and that Father Thayer then returned to Salem to await the expected dénouement.<sup>51</sup> This was to take place on Sunday, July 4th. After two days in Salem, June 29th and 30th, where he preached once in the Court House, Father Thayer returned to Boston.<sup>52</sup> And there, according to previous arrangements, the American priest sang the High Mass, at which the French priest "took his last solemn farewell of ye flock in ye pulpit."

The apparent settlement was hardly announced before it was undone. At the usual first Sunday of the month church meeting, it was the only subject of discussion. The numbers for

<sup>49</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 15, 1790; see also *ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1791.

<sup>50</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, July 27.

<sup>51</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, July 27, 1790.

<sup>52</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, I, 182.

Father Rousselet and against Father Thayer were larger than the latter realized, or, at least, asserted. The church's official books recorded it thus:

July 4, 1790

At the meeting of the Roman Catholick Church, held this day, *Voted*, That the thanks of the members of this Church shall be given to our Bishop, John Carroll, for appointing the Rev. Mr. de Rousselet our Pastor, acquainting him that the members of this church have with cheerfulness accepted his appointment. *Further Voted*, That this Church do settle from this day forward said Rev. Mr. de Rousselet, their only Pastor, Publick Teacher, Instructor, and Curate of said Church of the Holy Cross in Boston.

Signed Mamey Masson  
Patrick Campbell  
(In behalf of the Congregation)

Accepted.

Signed L. de Rousselet <sup>53</sup>

Further analysis of this extraordinary change in the course of events is neither possible nor necessary. Father Thayer laid much of the blame upon the French Consul, who, he charged, had "fomented the division" and had "positively ordered [as he says] Mr. Rousselet to stay and not go to ye Ohio." Father Thayer likewise charged Father Rousselet with insincerity in even making the agreement to resign, with phrasing his farewell sermon in such words that it would not be accepted, and with ridiculing the American's manner of singing High Mass, etc. ("R. made even ye women he could gain hold up their hands in ye church, to vote for his stay.")

Nevertheless, despite the vote of the congregation, he himself refused to recognize the pastor's superiority any longer, on the technical ground that the latter, "having solemnly renounced it, could not again acquire it without a new investiture." It was then agreed by the two priests that

till matters were settled by ye Superior [the Vicar-General] we would leave things as they then were, i.e., that [Father Thayer]

<sup>53</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 15, 1790.

should say Mass and preach the sermons that he had arranged for the next ten days and then absent [himself] the greatest part of the season.<sup>54</sup>

Father Thayer's third visit to Salem was noticed by Bentley under date of Sunday, July 25th. "The Catholics of Boston have almost rejected Thayer [he wrote], who this evening preached in this town." Again, on July 27th, Bentley noted:

Mr. Thayer called upon me, & mentioned his purpose to open a Mass-house in this town, Mr. Rousselet having an appointment from the Bishop and having been publicly received at Boston. He sinks fast in the public esteem & has no prospect of success.<sup>55</sup>

The American priest undoubtedly did pastoral work in Salem at this time, saying Mass, seeking out Catholics, and instructing them. He was absent from Boston more than three weeks. On the last three days of that period, as well as at first, he certainly was in Salem, where the records show him administering his first baptisms there on August 13th, 14th, and 15th. The recipients of the Sacrament on these occasions were members of two Acadian families who had remained in Salem after the Great Departure. They were named Rue and Longevin. On the 15th, a certain Mary Flint Ryan, twenty-eight years of age, and her daughter, Marguerite, were baptized. Mrs. Ryan was the wife of a certain Francis Ryan, who, together with the old Mrs. Anna Rue, acted as godparents for these baptisms. There is some probability that at this time Father Thayer also extended the field of his priestly zeal to the south of Boston, as far as Newport.

During the missionary's absence from Boston, his father, Cornelius Thayer, passed away and was buried.<sup>56</sup> It was perhaps to look after his own interest in his father's estate that on Monday, August 16th, Father Thayer returned to Boston.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, July 27, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B H 3); *Columbian Centinel*, July 10, 1790.

<sup>55</sup> *Diary*, I, 188.

<sup>56</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, July 29, 1790; *Herald of Freedom*, Sept. 21, 1790.

<sup>57</sup> The father had died intestate, and his widow Suviah had been made administratrix.



## V

His return was the signal for the outbreak of schism because he came back without any change of heart in regard to Father Rousselet. Instead of making arrangements with the pastor for saying Mass in the church, he sent to the French warden for the keys, and was refused. He then sent Mr. Campbell, the Irish warden, for them, declaring that he "demanded them by ye authority of ye Bishop," and was again refused. Finally, he twice sent a certain John Lloyd for the keys with the same lack of success. As a result he said Mass in his own room daily and even on Sunday. That same Sunday (August 22nd), he

told ye Irish that if they'd stay in ye chapel after ye French had finished vespers & keep ye church open, [he] would preach at six. [He] gave one of them a written advertisement to put against ye church that [he] should preach at that hour. As soon as Masson saw it up, he plucked it down. Ye Irishmen, who stood by fearing some such thing, took him, one around ye body & another by ye hand & snatched away ye paper & replaced it.

According to Father Thayer's account,

all this passed without any other disorder. Yet, immediately [he continued], Mr. Rousselet pretended to be alarmed for ye honour of God, as if the house of God was profaned. He ordered ye altar to be stript, saying that Vespers could not be sung amid such disorder. Ye Irish quietly kept possession till six & I preached. But ye Frenchmen, before this, went to 2 or 3 meeting houses for constables, who came & heard ye sermon & declared they saw no appearance of riot.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, they told Father Thayer that he must not consider himself a lawful occupant of the church.<sup>59</sup>

On Monday, Father Thayer, together with Mrs. Lobb and one other person, probably Mrs. Doyle, "applied to ye owners of ye chapel; they [Mr. and Mrs. James H. Perkins] assured us

<sup>58</sup> Father Thayer to Father Fleming, Sept. 8, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B H 4).

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Bentley, *Diary*, Aug. 24, "Thayer at length dispossessed."

that their intention in letting Catholics have ye house was rather to oblige ye Irish, whom, as a nation they esteemed [*sic*]." Lists of both parties, French and Irish, were produced, and the owners, realizing from these that the Irish were "more numerous" and "more respectable in point of character," signed and delivered to Father Thayer a lease of the church. It was to run for three years at fifty pounds per year. That business was finished on Saturday, August 28th. That same day Father Thayer sent word to his rival that the latter might perform services in the church as usual on the next day. This offer Father Rousselet politely accepted. On Monday, August 30th, Father Thayer sent him word that he might continue to say Mass and Vespers on Sundays as usual, but that Father Thayer himself would preach at eleven and six, and would take both collections, "as we have a heavy rent to pay"; also that the French priest "might say Mass in the church whenever he pleased by sending for ye key and indemnifying the sexton who had it." The pastor's reply was an assertion of his own pastoral authority and an order to Father Thayer to refrain from any priestly functions in the church without his permission, under pain of excommunication.

On Tuesday, August 31st, the French were busy before the grand jury to find Father Thayer and Lloyd guilty of assault and battery on Mamé Masson; and a true bill was, in fact, obtained.

On Wednesday, September 1st, Masson and Campbell, the wardens, and some others, representing, as they claimed, some forty of the congregation, held a meeting at Father Rousselet's house, 23 Union Street, and voted:

That the Congregation, having the good of their religion at heart, will, notwithstanding the ill-usage which they have received of Mr. Thayer and his party, make offers of reconciliation to said Mr. Thayer and party which offers are consistent in every point with the desires of our Bishop, Jean Carroll, as appears by his letter of the 1st day of June last.

1st. That Mr. Thayer and his party shall sign over or procure another lease of the church [which] they have usurped

from us, to Messrs. Campbell and Masson, Wardens of the Church.

2nd. That Mr. de Rousselet will continue to officiate in the church as the sole Pastor, agreeable to his appointment from the Bishop, and that Mr. Thayer's party, joining the church, as they had previous to Mr. Thayer's arrival in this town; Mr. Thayer may yet be settled (if he chooses) at said Church, as Vicar under Mr. de Rousselet, agreeable to Mr. Carroll's desires.

The vote went on to state that unless these propositions were agreed to by Friday morning, September 3rd, a written order would be asked of the sheriff, so that they "may remove all our effects from the church we lately occupied in School Street, and for which we have lately paid or are engaged to pay."<sup>60</sup> When no reply was forthcoming from Father Thayer, the wardens obtained their order and proceeded to remove from the church all its ecclesiastical furniture, altar, tabernacle, and ornaments.

On Father Thayer's side in this division were Mrs. Lobb, Mrs. Doyle, Joanna Bushnell, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Campbell (at first), John Lloyd, John and Abigail Madden, Edmund Conner, John Duggan, Michael and Eleanor Burns, Robert Gary, Bartholomew Moor, John and Elizabeth Barron, Timothy Howard, John and Judith Reilly, James and Mary Doherty, Robert Cornwell, Patrick Hamilton, and probably also Daniel and Elizabeth English, and Owen and Elizabeth Callahan.

On Father Rousselet's side were to be found Mamé Masson, of course, and John Jutau, John Piemont, probably James Nebon, and Mrs. Margaret Price, as well as John Magner and Patrick Campbell (the latter probably only after August 24th). Other French may have been James Gardett and his wife Rachel; John and Lydia Dalyn, Cailleaux du Rivage, Pierre and Frances Murat, Joseph Després, Theodore Dehon, and the French group in Dedham generally, headed by Mr. Breckvelt de Larive.

More than half a century later a person who had been an

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 15, 1790.

eye-witness of these disturbances, wrote about the "respective parties, the Irish and the French [*sic*] bawling, threatening, vociferating, and brandishing their clubs in the old church in School Street, and Mr. Thayer screaming from the pulpit, trying to appease the tumult."<sup>61</sup>

Father Thayer himself admitted that at that time he "forbade [Mr. Campbell] under peril of ye law to draw a nail from ye Church," when the latter was engaged in taking away the altar and tabernacle. Father Thayer professed to believe that the opposition, despite their court order, were in truth amenable to the law for touching these articles because, he said, "I can prove that ye Irish contributed about [above?] fifty dollars towards ye building of them."

Nevertheless, the French had the church furnishings and arranged to have services in the house which Father Rousselet occupied at 23 Union Street. At the public Mass held there on Sunday, September 5th, Father Rousselet prayed for Father Thayer and his group as excommunicated. The French sent John Magner to Philadelphia to explain their situation to Father Fleming, the Vicar-General.

The schism was a public fact, but it was not allowed to remain merely such; it became the occasion of a newspaper campaign. A series of lampoons against the American priest began to appear in the *Herald of Freedom*, the first of which was a play on Father Thayer's expectations from his father's estate. The others took the form of an annotated copy of the *Account of the Conversion*, and were an attack on the priest's intellectual ability, his sincerity, and even his morals.<sup>62</sup>

Suddenly, on September 15th, which would be about the time of Magner's return from Philadelphia, a different type of newspaper item appeared. It was the warden's official bid for a peaceful settlement.

As the disunion now subsisting between the Roman Catholics in this town, might appear, through the insinuations of

<sup>61</sup> Thomas Walley, in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 44-48.

<sup>62</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, Aug. 31, Sept. 3, 10, 21, 1790; cf. also the *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 15, 1790, and Bentley, *Diary*, I, 194.



the adverse party, in an unfavourable light to the prejudice of the followers of the Rev. Mr. Rousselet, they therefore think it their duty to exculpate themselves of the impressions that the removal of the furniture of the Church, might give against them, by informing the publick of the following facts.

1stly. That the Wardens of said Church are followers of the Rev. Mr. Rousselet, and that they are the sole responsors for the payment of those articles, and therefore they look on them as their property.

2dly. That the followers of the Rev. Mr. Rousselet are not induced to do so by spirit of party nor by ill-founded malice against Mr. Thayer, but as they are really Catholicks they are obliged to follow the good Pastor appointed by their Bishop, agreeably to the rights of their Church.

3dly. That if the disunion has taken place, it is not for the want of proposals made by the followers of the Rev. Mr. Rousselet to Mr. Thayer and party.

(Signed) Mamey Mason  
Patrick Campbell.<sup>63</sup>

A few days afterwards, Father Thayer made his public reply; it too was dated September 15th:

Mr. Russell,

I am able to refute victoriously every insinuation to my disadvantage in the *Statement of Facts*, and to cover with confusion the authors of it, if they are not lost to all shame. This I am ever ready to do in private to any gentleman who should wish it. But, Sir, I shall never engage in a paper war. . . . Too much scandal has already been given to our good Protestant brethren since the establishment of the Catholick Church in this town. As they are in no way interested in our disputes, I shall take no further publick notice of what may be said against me hereafter.

John Thayer.<sup>64</sup>

Some appearance of a temporary settlement was made known in Boston about October 9th. The Vicar-General, Father Fleming, had written to Fathers Thayer and Rousselet granting separate jurisdictions to the two priests until the matter should

<sup>63</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 15, 1790. <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 18, 1790.

be definitely decided by the Bishop on his return. In his letter to Father Thayer, the Vicar-General recommended that the latter's party should contribute to the French priest's support, probably on the ground that the Irish were more numerous and that they actually had possession of the church building.<sup>65</sup>

The Irish, however, who had "nearly exhausted themselves by rebuilding ye altar and sanctuary," were neither in position nor mood to comply with the Vicar-General's charitable suggestion: and they wrote him in this sense. At the same time they expressed to him their thanks for having put an end to the difficulty.

Father Rousselet, on his side, recognized at least a temporary defeat: and finally decided to go on a trip to the Indians who had asked for a priest. Nevertheless, before starting for Maine, he advertised in the *Columbian Centinel* (October 20, 1790) that during his few weeks' absence, "Prayers will be read every Sunday at [his] House (Union Street, No. 23), where any who are well disposed may attend." There was some newspaper bitterness about this also.

The French priest's financial difficulties were manifested by another part of the same advertisement. It stated that after his return he would "be very happy to gratify the great desire many gentlemen, his friends, have to learn the French and Spanish Languages, to open his Day and Evening School, the 15th of November next, in his house."

## VI

The extremes to which the schism led are illustrated by a striking incident. On November 4, 1790, while the French priest was on his missionary trip to the Indians, a prominent French officer died at Dedham. He was Mr. Breckvelt de Larive, late Treasurer of the Island of Guadeloupe and its dependencies, who in the previous May had come to Boston with his family for his health.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Father Thayer to Father Fleming, Oct. 14, 1790; Bishop Carroll to Father Rousselet, Feb. 3, 1791.

<sup>66</sup> *Massachusetts Centinel*, May 29, 1790; *Columbian Centinel*, Nov. 10, 1790.

The family were of Father Rousselet's party, and were so opposed to Father Thayer that they chose to have the funeral held in Trinity Church rather than in the Catholic Church. Thus, on Monday, November 8th, the funeral proceeded "from the house of Mr. John Jutau, near Fort Hill and opposite the French Consul's to Trinity Church." There the Rev. Dr. Parker performed the service, and there the deceased was buried in the vault. A goodly number of citizens attended "to testify their regard for so respectable a subject of our great and generous ally."<sup>67</sup>

When the French priest returned, November 24th, from his trip to the Penobscots, arrangements were made to have him celebrate a month's mind requiem Mass for the deceased. The pastor of Trinity, the church wardens, and nine vestrymen unanimously voted to accede to Father Rousselet's request for the use of their church for this occasion (November 30th).<sup>68</sup>

The requiem Mass was held on Thursday, December 2nd. The incident occasioned some very unfavorable comment on the part of some Protestants. One communication about it was sent for publication to the editors of the *Columbian Centinel*. It was entitled, "The Roman Catholick done over — or the once Trinity House of God turned into a Puppet-Shew room." The newspaper rejected the piece with the announcement: "If even a little innocent satire on the subject would be savoury, particles of the above are too saline for insertion," and declared that "it would ill-comport with that spirit of toleration which is our country's boast, to insert it."<sup>69</sup>

The Rev. Dr. Belknap sent a rather caustic account of the incident to a friend in Philadelphia for publication there — but again, a newspaper refused to vilify Episcopalians and Catholics. Part of Belknap's communication read:

Last Thursday, Trinity church was decorated with the insignia of *popish* idolatry in the chancel, directly under the 2d

<sup>67</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Nov. 8, 1790; *Columbian Centinel*, Nov. 10, 1790. The French Consul had used his influence to obtain this permission from the Rev. Dr. Parker.

<sup>68</sup> *Trinity Church Records*, Nov. 30 and Dec. 5, 1790 (ms. in Trinity Church); *Columbian Centinel*, Dec. 1, 1790.

<sup>69</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Dec. 4, 1790.

commandment; and after the Mass was said, a sermon followed, the whole composing as complete a farce as can well be conceived. The more they expose their religion to public show, the more its absurdities appear, and it is become an object of ridicule even to our children. You know how much stress they lay on the argument from the unity of their church. Their conduct here is a most brilliant comment on this argument, for the French and Irish papists cannot meet in the same place without quarreling. Once the peace-officers were called in to prevent them from coming to blows. Such is the unity of the Catholic Church in Boston. . . . If you please, you may give the above to Fenno. . . .<sup>70</sup>

Perhaps it was due to the same incident that Father Rousselet, still without a public church, made application to the Rev. Mr. Parker for the use of Trinity Church for his congregation "to celebrate the approaching festival of Christmas on the Night preceding and following said Day." The wardens and vestry of that church, however, unanimously refused the request.<sup>71</sup>

The situation in Boston is further illustrated by the fact that the young daughter of Patrick Campbell was buried December 18, 1790, from Father Rousselet's house.<sup>72</sup>

## VII

On December 28, 1790, an item in the *Herald of Freedom* informed Boston Catholics that "the Right Rev. Doctor John Carrol, lately consecrated Bishop of the Catholic See in America," had arrived in Baltimore.

Father Rousselet immediately wrote to the Bishop (January 2nd), and the party which followed him, still calling itself "the Congregation," also wrote on January 9th. These letters arrived in Baltimore only after the Bishop had taken action to settle the Boston situation.

<sup>70</sup> Belknap to Hazard, *Belknap Papers*, II, 240-241, 243; cf. also Father Thayer to Father Fleming, Dec. 8, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>71</sup> *Trinity Church Records*, in *Arch. of P.E. Dioc. of Mass.*

<sup>72</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Dec. 18, 1790.



In the early part of January, or even perhaps in late December, the Bishop had written to Father Thayer that he would shortly confirm in regular form his provisional appointment by Father Fleming, as pastor of Boston. He had understood from his Vicar-General that Father Rousselet had announced his resignation, and had written some letters to Father Thayer, one of which the Bishop described as containing "so many indecent allusions and such uncharitable expressions" that he would censure Father Rousselet severely if the letter was really written by him.<sup>73</sup>

By the end of January, however, the Bishop received the letters written from Boston by Father Rousselet and his party. These letters began with congratulations to the Bishop on his safe return, and then continued with a series of charges, new and old, against Father Thayer.

Undoubtedly the letters which made these charges also contained a pressing invitation to Bishop Carroll to make a personal visit to Boston.<sup>74</sup> It is certain at least that Father Rousselet sent such an invitation to the Bishop in a later letter in which he declared:

Protestants of all classes here are pleased at your return to America and eager (*impatiens*) to see you in Boston. And there is no difficulty for you in coming here. I have, in the name of the Congregation the entire occupancy of a very nice house which is at your service and in which you will find a chapel, clean and properly fitted out, and, in general, all that is necessary for you. Do not lose a minute, I beseech you. . . .

The French priest's friendship with some Protestant ministers must have been the kernel of truth in the exaggerated terms in which he continued this invitation to the Bishop:

Come and admire the marvel of the Almighty, which all the ministers of this city are compelled to admire with me: I mean the continuation [*sic*] and the respect that exist here for our

<sup>73</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, Feb. 3, 1791; Bishop Carroll to Father Rousselet, Feb. 3, 1791.

<sup>74</sup> This last is gathered from Father Rousselet's later letter of Jan. 15, 1791 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 7 I 4).

human beings. This was particularly true of the English vessels, and even after 1850, when the crack clipper ships began to skim the sea lanes, British ships continued to be of the poorest type, slow, clumsy, dirty, and ill-managed; indeed they were inferior even to the Australian convict vessels.<sup>24</sup> American ships, on the other hand, showed a continual improvement; many were built for the passenger business, and even before the advent of the clipper ships outclassed the English in every respect. In Boston, Train and Company's ships were outstanding; they had the lowest rate of mortality,<sup>25</sup> and their business was so well conducted that their advertisements bore a letter of recommendation from Bishop Fitzpatrick. The difference in the ships of the two countries can be easily seen in the larger number of emigrants who came into Boston in American rather than British vessels.<sup>26</sup>

Some ships had only one emigrant deck — this was probably true of most of those entering Boston Harbor — while others had two, and the largest contained three. Hatches over the first deck gave some air and light to the passengers; emigrants on the second deck, despite wind sails and ventilation tubes, enjoyed little change in the atmosphere; while the third or orlop deck was an indescribable place, dark, low-ceilinged, and foul. An idea of living conditions on these lower decks can be gained by a study of the laws governing the amount of space allotted to each passenger. The United States Act of May 17, 1848, provided that each passenger was to be allowed fourteen square feet of deck space not occupied by stores or goods, except baggage. If the space between the decks was less than six feet high, then sixteen square feet was to be the rule, while if it was less than five feet (!) the allowance required was to be twenty-two square feet. No more than two tiers of berths were allowed (recall the five feet!), and each berth was to be six by one and a half feet.

The practice of having emigrants furnish food and cook it was extremely unsatisfactory. They were often cheated by the

<sup>24</sup> *Parliamentary Papers, loc. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> See the *Reports of the Superintendent of Alien Passengers*.

dealers, who gave them inferior articles that rotted during the voyage. Sometimes they were misinformed as to the amount they would need in order that, when their supply ran short, they would be forced to purchase from the captain at exorbitant prices. In some cases the emigrants did not have sufficient money to buy the required quantity of supplies. Cooking their meals was a problem. Fires were maintained on the open decks in tubs, boxes, and sometimes in stoves; generally the cooking space was uncovered; many of the grates were so small that a long line of hungry passengers waited, hour after hour, to get near them, while the sick, unable to assist themselves, had to rely on the kindness and charity of others for food. Despite the provision of the law regarding the stores that should be carried, and inspection to enforce it, shipowners could, and did, evade it, by having a tug follow the ships out to sea, and there some of the provisions would be swung over the side, and taken back to port.<sup>27</sup> Water was a problem; it often went bad on the voyage or ran short, especially if many days were spent at sea. A common way of concealing the taste and odor was to dose it with liberal quantities of vinegar.

The great curse of the emigrant ships from 1847 to 1849,<sup>28</sup> so far as Boston-bound vessels were concerned, was ship fever, a disease similar to famine fever or hunger typhus. The 1847 ships were especially ridden with it, although it should be observed that some were much worse than others.<sup>29</sup> The horror of the Atlantic passage in 1847 is attested by the reports of various institutions and persons who came in contact with the immigrants. The Directors of the House of Industry, for instance, said: “. . . many die on the passage, and the survivors on arrival are in a wretched state of filth and disease.”<sup>30</sup> A legislative committee reported that many passengers, sick with the fever, had to be taken off the ships immediately after their

<sup>27</sup> John Francis Maguire, M.P., *The Irish in America* (London, 1868), p. 180.

<sup>28</sup> I give this date because, as will be explained later, a decided improvement became noticeable after this date.

<sup>29</sup> *Annual Report of the Directors of the House of Industry*, April 1, 1847 (*Boston City Arch.*).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



prevention of farther scandal. This will be the most effectual method of saving your reputation from the discredit into which it will fall, if the accounts from France should be divulged. They will not be made known to anyone by me, provided you retire peaceably. . . . I feel great anxiety for you on every account, etc. With a heart full of trouble, I am etc.

N.B. As soon as you receive this you will understand, that I revoke all powers and faculties which were granted by me. I let no one know this besides yourself.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Rousselet, Baltimore, March 10, 1791 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A, I 1, draft).



## CHAPTER III

### FATHER THAYER'S PASTORATE (1791-1792)

SHORTLY AFTER THE MIDDLE of March, 1791, Father Thayer learned from Bishop Carroll's letter of the 10th that he had been appointed sole pastor at Boston. In it, he also read:

As now you will have your authority enlarged, or rather, unrestrained by any opposition, I hope you will use it with such moderation and equal charity as may engage the hearts and confidence of all. . . . I trust that you will unite so much self-diffidence hereafter with your confidence in God as not to undertake things of so much consequence, not to yrsself only and to Religion at Boston, but everywhere, without advising with your Eccl. Supr.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop was disappointed in his hope. Affairs in Boston did not go on well, even after the visit which he himself made there in the following June. In the end he sought another priest to take Father Thayer's place.

The chief events of the latter's troubled pastorate were the mission to the Indians, Bishop Carroll's visit, the persistence of the schism, and, running through it all, a series of controversies with non-Catholics.

#### I

When Father Rousselet received Bishop Carroll's letter, he did not wait long in Boston, not even to see the Bishop. Instead he went a second time to the Indians of Maine. He had visited the Penobscots the preceding autumn in response to their invitation, and had probably been in correspondence with the Passamaquoddy tribe as well. This is a fitting place to take up again the story of these faithful Indian Catholics.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, Baltimore, March 10, 1791 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A 1 1, draft); cf. *Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 35.

Both of these tribes desired a priest; the Penobscots since Father Berthiaume's departure in 1788, and the Passamaquoddies since the war. The latter tribe particularly had been neglected by the Massachusetts Government after the war was over. They lived on the border between British Canada and the United States, and wandered from place to place on either side of the boundary. Yet the sympathies of most of them were with the States, and these repeatedly asked their old commander, Colonel John Allan, to procure them a settlement and a clergyman. Allan on his side had evaded their requests.<sup>2</sup>

During that same period they had also probably asked the Bishop of Quebec for a priest. The Penobscots certainly did so. Their first request was made some time after June 4, 1788, and was unsuccessful, because, as they were told, their territory had been ceded to the Anglo-Americans by the Treaty of 1783, and was then under the jurisdiction of the former Jesuit, Father Carroll, who had been named Prefect-Apostolic for the United States.<sup>3</sup>

On July 19, 1790, the Penobscots made a second appeal to Bishop Hubert. On this occasion they admitted for the first time the Canadian superiors' contention about Father Berthiaume, but they evidently did so to get a *successor* to that departed missionary.

It is thirty-one years since we have had prayer in our village, they said, because we have had no priest. We are here as representatives of our old folk, both men and women, and of our youth and children.

We would have made this journey sooner, if it were not that we had with us a man who called himself a priest; he was not one, but he said Mass and we acknowledge that in that we were deceived.

Our heart is sad. Is it not a reason for grief to see men of this age [indicating two of the deputies present], who have not yet received their First Communion? All our young folk have been baptized only by our own hands: as for our dead, we dig

<sup>2</sup> Report of John Allan to Mass. Council, 1793, in F. Kidder, *Military Operations in Eastern Maine, during the Revolution* (Albany, 1867), p. 315.

<sup>3</sup> J. O. Plessis, *Journal des Visites Pastorales*, ed. by Tétu (Quebec, 1903), p. 138.

their graves and bury them ourselves. Nor have we any one to teach us.

We seek a priest. God knows that is the reason why we decided to undertake this long and painful journey. It will touch the heart of our father [the Bishop] and he will find means of getting us one.

We know that our father [the Bishop] said that he would never be able to give us one who could make his permanent residence in our village: we therefore restrict ourselves to the request that he provide us a mission of about two months from time to time.<sup>4</sup>

It was in reply to this appeal that Bishop Hubert told them of the appointment of Father Carroll as bishop in the United States. They returned home with that news, and immediately thereafter sent a letter "to the Fathers of the church in New England."

Their letter reached either Father Rousselet or Father Thayer, or both, at the height of their disagreement, some time between September 8 and September 22, 1790. Father Rousselet at once gave out the news that he would accept the invitation and announced that he would sail on October 21st, for a few weeks' visit to the Penobscot tribe.<sup>5</sup> He did in fact make the journey; and while among the Indians he "had the consolation of having 102 communions, 65 baptisms and 12 marriages."<sup>6</sup> Father Rousselet also brought back with him two Penobscot boys to be educated in Boston; and shortly after his return began taking up a collection to defray the expenses involved.

There is still extant a letter which he wrote to Governor Hancock on December 9, 1790, explaining that his trip involved him in an expense too heavy for him to bear, and "I cannot receive any aid from the public until the meeting of the General Assembly. I am therefore constrained to ask the support of the friends to the design, to enable me fully to execute it, until I shall be assisted by Government."<sup>7</sup> One

<sup>4</sup> *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*, N.B. IV, 1.      <sup>5</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 20, 1790.

<sup>6</sup> Father Rousselet to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 15, 1791.

<sup>7</sup> *Hancock Papers*, at *Harvard Business School*.

sequel of this letter was that on January 26, 1791, Father Rousselet, styling himself "Pastor of the Roman Catholic Congregation in Boston," presented a petition to the Legislature for a grant of money to compensate him for his services among the Penobscots.<sup>8</sup>

On the very same day Father Thayer wrote a letter (which was published in the next day's *Columbian Centinel*), expressing his official opposition to his rival's Indian activities. He had already complained to his own superior at Philadelphia about the matter in October.<sup>9</sup> In his public complaint in January, he denied his rival's right both to the title Pastor of the Catholic Congregation, and to jurisdiction over the Indians, and he asserted his own right to both. Then he offered to visit the Indians himself, 'without fee or reward,' provided that the Government of Massachusetts would recommend him to the tribes. "It is obvious to remark [he said] that it is more agreeable to sound policy to entrust this charge in the hands of an American . . . than to a foreigner, who . . . by the change of national interest, may one day become an enemy."<sup>10</sup>

In this same month of January, 1791, the Passamaquoddies and others sent a message to Colonel Allan, which this time he did not evade. They were much excited and repeated their former demands for a settlement and a priest, and delivered it in such a manner as alarmed Allan. He consented to meet and consult with them and finally to write a letter to Father Thayer for them. Undoubtedly their excitement had to do with Father Rousselet's having visited the Penobscots. Father Thayer would surely have answered them with some details about Father Rousselet, saying that his mission was without proper authorization from either the State of Massachusetts or the Bishop of Baltimore, who would take care of them, now that he was returned from Europe. Two letters passed between Allan and Father Thayer on the matter.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *House Journal*, XI, 158. The General Court granted the priest 21 pounds, but the Governor did not sign the Resolve (*House Journal*, XI, 301; *Senate Journal*, XI, 223); cf. also *House Docs.*, 1791, no. 3447; *Baxter Mss.*, XXIII, 361.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. his letter to Bishop Carroll (Fleming?), Oct. 14, 1790 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B H 5).

<sup>10</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Jan. 27, 1791.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Allan to Bishop Carroll, May 21, 1791, below.



As a result the Indians addressed a special request to the Bishop of Baltimore. They mentioned their need of a priest, the long time that had elapsed since they had one, and their desperate attempt to get one.

We have applied several times to our brothers the Americans. We have sent to the Fathers in the church of this State [Mass.] for a priest, but none comes; it looks as if we were shut out from all the blessings and benefits of our Religion. We pray you, Father of the church in this land, to think of us & send one suitable for our purpose, to continue a year. . . . In token of our sincerity and duty, we send with this the Holy Cross, by the consent and desire of all the tribes.

The letter was signed by Passamaquoddy, St. John, and Micmac Indians.

Allan's covering letter told the Bishop of his long acquaintance with these Indians and with their disposition respecting their religious tenets.

They are a very exemplary people (consistent with their custom & manners) as are to be met with — zealous & tenacious of the rites of the Church & strictly moral, cautious of misbehaving in point of religion, even to be observ'd when intoxicated.

I have been often surprised so little notice have been taken of them in this respect. Tho' rude and uncultivated in many other matters, they are truly civilized in this, and it was always observ'd by the French Gentlemen of the Clergy, which we were favour'd with during the war, that they never saw a more respectable collection in France, & excepting the Cathedrals & some perticular places of Worship, their performance, Chants in Latin, &c. were in most instances superior to any. I have been myself charmed with them, when shut up in the woods, & tho of a different sentiment, believe them truly to be good Christians, meriting the peculiar blessings of the Deity. . . . they teach their children when able to Lisp a word, the Service, & as they grow up become in a manner innate, this owing to the assiduity of the French Missionaries, much to their honor.

Allan also mentioned their great attachment to America, their fidelity during the war, and the value for trade and provision to the neighborhood.

As to their circumstances [he continued] I presume from what I have already seen, there woud not be a more profitable mission thro' the States, nor a situation more agreeable, for a person who is actuated & influenced with a Spirit of Christianity. . . . Shoud you Rev'd Sir grant the favour to them, we have it in contemplation to build a Chapple; having several tracts of land of my own, I shall give a Spot for it, or procure one from Government. . . . As there mind is never in pursuit of many objects at once, they are consequently very attentive, with much taciturnity & Sagacity, on the perticuler object they have in view — they soon know a priests character & tho they will be all obedience for his dignifyd station, shoud they perceive any imprudence, will quickly observe & resent it. When a person is examplary for his Life & Conversation — Strictly attentive to the duty of his Calling — Open, Affable, free and generous (within the bounds of that distinction to be always observed by spiritual teachers) they will sacrifice all for him, nothing they can do will be too good. . . . The Cross sent belongs to a family, has been in it many Generations, they are very anxious for its savety, I would recommend to have it returned.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, Father Rousselet had left Boston (*ca.* end of March, 1791) to go to the Penobscots, and had sent a message to the Passamaquoddies, "requiring their attendence immediately, w'h further intellegence, that a number of French gentlemen & others of the Roman Church were waiting for them." The Indians then set out reluctantly, for they did not like to go to Penobscot. This last item came from Allan's letter to Bishop Carroll.<sup>13</sup>

Bishop Carroll wrote a reply to the Indians' letter on September 6th:

<sup>12</sup> J. Allan to Bishop Carroll, May 21, 1791 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 1563).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* At the same Council the Indians agreed also "that an address be presented to the General Court of Mass., to lay out a suitable settlement, as a resort for themselves and a residence for the Priest" (John Allan's *Report*, in Kidder, *op. cit.*, p. 315).

Brethren and beloved Children in Jesus Christ

I received with the greatest pleasure the Testimony of your attachment to your holy Religion: & I venerated the sacred Crucifix sent by you, as expressive of your faith. . . .

As soon as I received your request, and was informed of your necessity, I sent for one or two virtuous Priests to go and remain with you, that you may never more be reduced to the same distressful situation, in which you have lived so long. But as they are far distant, I am afraid they will not [?Torn] be with you before the putting out of the leaves again. This should have been done much sooner, if I had been informed of your situation. You may depend upon it, that you shall always be in my heart and mind; and if it please God to give me time, I will certainly visit you myself.

You have done very well not to receive amongst you, those ministers who go without being called, or without being sent by that authority which Jesus Christ has established for the government of his Church. Those, whom I shall send to you, will be such good and virtuous priests, as instructed your Forefathers in the law of God, and taught them to regard this life only as a preparation for, and a passage to, a better in Heaven.

In token of my Fatherly Love and sincere affection, I send back to you, after embracing it, the Holy Crucifix, which I received with your letter.<sup>14</sup>

The Bishop obtained the missionary mentioned only after a full year. Father Rousselet meanwhile remained with the Indians until December, 1791.<sup>15</sup> While with them he had sought entrance to the Diocese of Quebec, through the mediation of Father Jones, the Vicar-General of Nova Scotia. But by October 24, 1791, Father Jones withdrew his recommendation. He had learned of the French priest's suspension in Boston.<sup>16</sup>

## II

In 1791 Ash Wednesday fell on March 9th. As Father Rousselet had left Boston shortly thereafter, his followers were thus

<sup>14</sup> Original in *New England Hist.-Gen. Soc.*

<sup>15</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Dec. 5, 1791.

<sup>16</sup> Father Jones to the Bishop of Quebec, Oct. 24, 1791 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

deprived of their usual Lenten services. They also had little, if any, opportunity to join with Father Thayer's group in Lenten devotions, even if they had been willing, because in early April this priest also left Boston. As he did not return until the end of May, there were no Catholic services in Boston either in the latter part of Lent or in Paschal tide.

Father Thayer went to Philadelphia. He had probably long anticipated an opportunity of fulfilling his own spiritual duties with the help of a priest of his own choice: he could now combine this with the advantage of a personal conference with the Bishop.<sup>17</sup> On his journey from Boston south, Father Thayer went by way of Hartford, where, strangely enough, he lodged in the same house with his former Yale classmate, Noah Webster. He arrived there Saturday, April 9th. The next day he celebrated "High" Mass in his own room — and, most surprisingly, Noah Webster himself attended.<sup>18</sup> This was perhaps the first time that an English-speaking priest ever said Mass in Hartford.

On April 11, Father Thayer was in New Haven, probably for the first time since his college days, and took occasion to visit Ezra Stiles, the President of Yale. The visit could hardly have been pleasant, for Stiles described Father Thayer as

the Romish Priest, born at Boston a Protestant, commenced his Life in Impudence, Ingratitude, Lying and Hypocrisy, irregularly took up preach'g among the Congregationalists, went to France and Italy, became a Proselyte to the Romish church, & is returned to convert America to that chh. He showed me a medal of Pius VI . . . of haughty insolent & insidious Talents.

On the 12th and the 15th, Father Thayer "preached in Mr. Dow's Meeting-House" at Fairhaven.<sup>19</sup> He was in New York for Easter, April 24th, proceeded from there to Philadelphia, and finally was back in Boston by Sunday, May 22nd.

<sup>17</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, New York, April 24, 1791.

<sup>18</sup> Noah Webster's *Diary*, April 9-10, 1791 (ms. in *New York Public Library*). Above notes contributed in letter of Mrs. Roswell Skeel to R. H. Lord, Sept. 28, 1937.

<sup>19</sup> Stiles, *Literary Diary*, III, 416, April 11, 12, 15, 1791.



Bishop Carroll arrived at the same time.<sup>20</sup> As he was the first Catholic bishop to visit Boston, his coming was truly an event. In view of the town's traditional hostility to Popery and Prelacy, the respectful and hospitable reception accorded him by the citizens of the metropolis was unbelievable. He was invited to several large functions. Outstanding among these was the Annual Election celebration of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, held Monday, June 6th. The Company was accustomed each year to invite to this celebration all the clergy of the city, even the Episcopalians and the Catholics. The previous year both Fathers Rousselet and Thayer had attended, and this year also Father Thayer was present as well as the Bishop. The sermon was delivered as usual at the Old Brick Meeting-House, but on this occasion it was for the first time given by an Episcopalian, the Rev. Dr. Parker, of Trinity Church. After the service the usual banquet was held at Faneuil Hall, but this year "the blessing was craved by the Rev. Dr. Parker, and thanks returned by Bishop Carroll."<sup>21</sup>

This extraordinary procedure occasioned the Rev. John Eliot to comment in his interleaved almanac:

*June 6.* An elegant entertainment at the hall, where a clergyman of the C. of England & a Romish Bp. acted as chaplains. How would our fathers have Stared! Tempora mutantur &c. And much to the credit of modern times.

He went on to note in the same *Diary*, "June 8. I dined with Bp. Carroll at Dr. Parkers."<sup>22</sup>

The Bishop also attended a similar, although less elaborate, annual service at Trinity Church on Tuesday, June 14th, when the Rev. Dr. Parker preached for the Humane Society.<sup>23</sup> On both of these occasions the Governor, John Hancock, was

<sup>20</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, May 25, 1791. It is known that the Bishop was in Boston on May 27th (Bentley, *Diary*). Father Thayer baptized in Boston on May 22nd (*Baptismal Register*).

<sup>21</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, June 8, 1791.

<sup>22</sup> Quotations from Rev. Percival Merritt, *Sketches of the Three Earliest Roman Catholic Priests in Boston*, reprint from the *Publications of the Colonial Society*, XXV (1923), 206.

<sup>23</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, June 17, 1791.

present. Without doubt, the Bishop had been entertained by the Governor and by other prominent citizens. He dined on Tuesday, May 31st, for example, at Mr. Barrell's.<sup>24</sup> He certainly received "innumerable favours and civilities" from the Governor during his stay in Boston and later wrote him the following "Thank you" letter:

Baltimore, Aug. 28th, 1791.

Sir,

I should have great cause to reproach myself & would deserve the imputation not only of ingratitude, but absolute insensibility, if I neglected to make my warmest acknowledgments to your Excellency for your innumerable favours & civilities, during my stay at Boston. They were such as both astonished and confounded me: I knew, that your Excellency was conspicuous for civility & politeness, as well as eminent for patriotism and public services; and I had always heard, that the town of Boston was distinguished for its hospitality; But every thing was far beyond my highest expectations.<sup>25</sup>

On the second Sunday of Bishop Carroll's stay in the city, "a crowded and very respectable audience" attended "the Catholic chapel in School Street" to hear the Bishop speak. Among the group were "His Excellency the Governor, and Lady, the Hon. Thomas Russell and Lady, the Hon. Edward Cutts and Jeremiah Allen, Esq." The Bishop "preached an elegant and candid sermon" and his listeners "appeared highly gratified by the charity, the benevolence, the piety which appeared [the newspaper account continued] to have subverted in the mind of the Right Rev. Preacher, superstition and priestcraft, too generally found among the less instructed Missionaries of the Romish church."

So ran the report of the *Herald of Freedom* on June 7, 1791. The same newspaper, on the previous Friday, June 3rd, had given an advance notice of that sermon, "which, doubtless," it

<sup>24</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, I, 262.

<sup>25</sup> Bishop John Carroll to Governor John Hancock of Massachusetts (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*). Printed in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 389 ff.

commented, "must awaken the attention of the enlightened Protestants of this Country."

Naturally there were some Bostonians who, while recognizing that times had changed, quite clearly felt that the change was for the worse rather than for the better. One of these, a former Bostonian, who was then living as a refugee in London, expressed that reaction quite plainly.

It is very surprising [he wrote to his American correspondent], considering that the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion at Quebec was one of the heavy grievances the American Congress complained of, that your governor and other great men in your town should attend the worship of God in a Roman Catholic church, to hear a Romish bishop on a Sunday; and that he should be one of the chaplains who officiated at a public dinner! I cannot at present account for their inconsistency any otherwise than by supposing the part they took in the late unhappy contest lays so heavy upon their consciences that they imagine no one can absolutely absolve them but a Romish priest.<sup>26</sup>

Another Bostonian, while also adding his testimony to the story of Bishop Carroll's reception, gave a different explanation — one probably close to the truth. The historian, the Rev. Mr. Belknap, expressed himself thus: "Bishop Carroll is here yet, and I assure you is treated with the greatest attention and respect by most of our distinguished characters; but the cause which he meant to serve is not the foundation of this respect; it is wholly owing to his personal character."<sup>27</sup>

The Bishop himself, while still in Boston, wrote sincerely about all this to his friend Father Plowden in England.

It is wonderful to tell what great civilities have been done to me in this town, where a few years ago a popish priest was thought to be the greatest monster in the creation. Many here, even of their principal people, have acknowledged to me, that they would have crossed to the opposite side of the street

<sup>26</sup> Harrison Gray (refugee) to Rev. Mr. Montague, of Boston, Aug. 1, 1791, London. J. Loring, *The Hundred Orators of Boston* (Boston, 1892), p. 193.

<sup>27</sup> Hazard-Belknap Correspondence, 5 Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc., III, 263-265.

rather than meet a Rom. Catholic, some time ago. The horror, which was associated with the Idea of a Papist, is incredible; and the scandalous misrepresentations, by their ministers, increased the horror every Sunday.<sup>28</sup>

In this same letter to Father Plowden, the Bishop summed up the Catholic situation and his own view of it in the words:

Mr. Thayer has quarrelled with the French, & I wish I may not lose my labour in trying to compose their differences. As it constantly happens in these cases, both sides are in fault. If all the Catholics here were united, their number would be about one hundred & twenty. It is probable there are more concealed, & who, in consequence of intermarriages, long disuse, & worldly motives, decline making an acknowledgment & profession of their faith. In these circumstances, I am very sorry not to have here a clergyman of amiable conciliating manners, as well as of real ability.

Bishop Carroll stayed in Boston slightly over three weeks, although his intention before arriving was to stay here only ten days. While here he naturally performed the ordinary priestly functions of saying Mass, and preaching: which he did on the three Sundays of his sojourn in the city. He also took advantage of his presence to give the Sacrament of Confirmation to "above thirty persons" on Ascension Thursday, June 2nd.<sup>29</sup> All these services were held at the church in School Street.

The Bishop also undoubtedly took advantage of every opportunity that offered to learn about the religious situation of the Catholics in the city, in order to justify to Father Rousselet's party his own previous decision and to prepare a correct and fitting plan of settlement for the still divided flock. Conversations with all the leaders on both sides were of course in order. Indeed, the Bishop had on arrival gone at once to visit the French Consul, and with him and one or two more of Father Rousselet's friends descended to some particulars, and showed a part of the information received from France about him. But

<sup>28</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Plowden, Boston, June 11, 1791 (*Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 36).

<sup>29</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, June 3.



he had not revealed any of this to others. Even to Father Thayer, the Bishop told nothing more than that he had received advices from Paris which did not allow him to make any further use of the French priest's services.

On the other hand, the Bishop learned in Boston that Father Rousselet had administered the Sacrament of Penance after his faculties had been revoked; and he quite clearly recognized that even the priest's visit to the Indians, "however charitable and well intended it may be," was irregular. This he wrote to Father Rousselet.<sup>30</sup>

As for Father Thayer, the Bishop had no other choice than to continue him in the position of pastor of Boston. He had offered him a place in the South, but the American priest refused it. He had spoken of the latter's overgreat assumption of clerical authority, but Father Thayer signed a document that he acknowledged the Bishop's authority and would submit if the Bishop should later require his removal. The Bishop also brought up the matter of the lease of the church, and the priest offered to make it over to the Bishop, who however refused to accept this. Finally, the Bishop, on June 16th, the day he left Boston, promulgated to the congregation his official appointment of Father Thayer as pastor, "as long as the Bishop or his successors shall judge it to be of general utility to continue him in that employment." The Bishop's announcements also contained other results of his desire "of restoring harmony in the congregation and promoting the increase of religion and piety." One resolution had to do with

a mode of disposing of the pews, in which all may find equal advantage, but the best pew shall be reserved for the Consul of his most Xtian Majesty. . . .

Fourthly — That the Congregation at large ought to contribute & consider themselves bound to pay the debt contracted before the late separation & in consequence of assuming the payment of Abbé La Poterie's debts. The Bishop will think it unjust and dishonorable in the Congregation to let the whole burden of payment fall on those two persons only who in this business were [*sic*] agents for the rest. . . .

<sup>30</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A 11.

Fifthly — The Congregation generally will not be under any obligation of contributing to the payment of the debt aforesaid unless the articles received from the Abbé la Poterie be accounted for and restored for the use of the church, now under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Thayer.

I make no order respecting the things sent by the Archbishop [of Paris], because if they are to be pd for & the Trustees are bound for payment, these last have no other security for their indemnification but the articles themselves.

[No date] June 16, 1791 (?) <sup>31</sup>

After the Bishop left Boston, an appreciation of his visit appeared in the *Herald of Freedom* (June 24, 1791):

#### BISHOP CARROLL

This amiable Gentleman and benevolent Christian left Boston on Thursday week (i.e. June 16), regretted by those who had been favoured with his conversation, and possessing the esteem of the candid, the liberal, and the wise. As a preacher, his talents were admired; as a companion, his society was sought; as a man, he was esteemed, revered, and honoured. The narrow prejudices entertained by the ignorant or the illiberal, vanished from the radiance of his candour, and shrunk from the test of his piety. Under his auspices, even the prejudiced view with more favourable eyes, a religion which he so truly adorned. The narrowness of soul which some have evidently displayed, (without a consciousness of the fact, perhaps) in declaring that the doctrines of the church over which he presides in this country, were in their *nature* prejudicial to the interests of morality, — by his character and conduct were answered and refuted; and it may be hoped that we shall profit from the experience gained, nor longer be induced to lend a readier ear to calumny, than truth. *Boston* would congratulate the hour of this Gentleman's return, and will remember with gratitude and pleasure, his visit to this State.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 10 F 1 (draft); cf. also 9 A I 1, 9 A I 2; *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, IX (1892), 42.

<sup>32</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, June 24, 1791; cf. *ibid.*, article headed "Catholic Church."

## III

Nevertheless, all the authority of the Bishop's position, all the prestige enjoyed by him with the non-Catholics of the city, all the prudence of his tactful procedure were unavailing to unite the two parties of Boston Catholics. Immediately after the Bishop's departure, the new pastor also left the city, perhaps in order to allow the Bishop's plans to be accepted by the opposition, but ostensibly to labor in the missions.

On Tuesday, June 21st, he was in Salem, where he performed two baptisms, one of them for the daughter of Jeremiah and Maria Rhue Longevais (*sic*). On his return to Boston (*ca.* July 9th), he found that the French had abused the Bishop's confidence. They let it become known that the Bishop gave them the prospect of another priest, and John Magner actually told Father Thayer that he was pastor only till the Bishop could find another priest to fill his place.<sup>33</sup> There was much argument about the disposition of the pews, on which matter the opposing parties were unable to come to any agreement. Then Father Thayer rashly decided, like the headstrong man he was called, that all the pews should be pulled down immediately and benches fixed in their place. "I have agreed with ye Carpenter," he said and claimed that he acted by the Bishop's order.<sup>34</sup>

So the schism persisted. There was not one French baptism, marriage, or burial in the church the rest of the year. Nor were John Magner, Patrick or Mary Campbell, Mrs. Price, Mamey Masson, or even Mary Lobb recorded as official witnesses in the services that did take place. Patrick Campbell wrote to the Bishop that one half of the congregation did not go. He added, "The French and a grate part of the Irish say that they will send for a priest if you don't send them one, for, they say, they have no place to go on Sunday, except they go to meeting." The poor Irish warden then went on to ask the Bishop's pardon for no longer going to church.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, July 27, 1791 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B H 7).

<sup>34</sup> Patrick Campbell to Bishop Carroll, Aug. 31, 1791 (*ibid.*, 2 F 6).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

On September 20th, the opponents of Father Thayer sent to the Bishop a kind of ultimatum. Its purport and the Bishop's reaction to it are seen in his reply, dated Baltimore, October 6, 1791.

Dear Sir,

As your name stands foremost in the list of subscribers to a paper, which is dated Sep'r 20th, & was received the first instant, to you I address my answer. You and some others of the Congregation have been informed already of my intentions, & of the endeavours I am using to restore peace amongst you, so necessary for your own improvement in virtue and for general edification. But if you are not yet content but expect more from me within the short time allowed by your paper, I will not deceive you by promising more than I can perform. You give notice that you will send for a priest, who shall not put himself under the jurisdiction of any Bishop. The obvious inference from this is, that you will assert [?] for yourselves a power which you can never possess, and to which schismatics alone pretend, of conferring spiritual jurisdiction. If unfortunately any priest should be wicked enough to accept his spiritual powers from you, that alone will be sufficient proof of his being unworthy of confidence; and my duty will command me to interdict him without delay. Afterwards you may call him indeed your pastor, & make use of his sacrilegious ministry; but I now give you warning that every pretended act of spiritual jurisdiction exercised by him without Episcopal approval will be null & void; and your consciences will be loaded with accumulated guilt for resorting to his ministry.

I find it necessary to speak thus plainly to you. I must not leave you ignorant or unmindful of the most certain principles of our faith. The proposed measure is calculated to defeat every hope, and every temperate plan for effecting the so much desired reconciliation. It affords your opponents a plausible opportunity of saying, that to gratify your resentment, you are ready to endanger y'r Religion & expose the Sacraments, and even the venerable sacrifice of the altar to a sacrilegious profanation: for these would be the certain consequences of calling an unauthorised priest to officiate amongst you.



[Stricken out:] I do not mean by this to pass any judgment of approbation on Mr. Thayer's conduct in removing the pews without the knowledge of the Congreg'n; when I first heard of it, I foreboded the consequence.

You require me to order Mr. Thayer to rebuild the pews; & to remove him before the 20th of this month & send you another Clergyman. Were the pews built by the Congregation, or any individual of it? if so, let either the Congregation or those individuals assert their right to have them restored: I have no objection, if this be done without any breach of charity. To comply with your other requisition of removing Mr. Thayer *now* would be not only exciting violent opinion, but leaving the sick, the dying and all generally without assistance even in their greatest need. This I will not do, & am sorry you should demand anything which my conscience forbids me to grant.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless the Bishop did write to Father Thayer, asking him to leave Boston *for the time being*. A diocesan synod was to be held in Baltimore, beginning November 7th, which the Bishop may have invited Father Thayer to attend. In any case, the latter left Boston between October 24th and 26th. He was at Newport on the 28th, and appeared in Baltimore on November 10th at the last session of the synod. He did not return to Boston again until the springtime, and then remained only a few months, for his chosen successor had already arrived in America.

In the meantime, Father Rousselet returned from Maine to Boston. The first hint of his presence here is dated December 5, 1791. It is certain that he was in Dedham on February 25, 1792; on that date he baptized three French children there. Whether he performed divine service in Boston is not known.

#### IV

Besides the schism, the point that stands out in Father Thayer's career in Boston is his series of controversies with non-

<sup>36</sup> Bishop Carroll to — (at Boston), Baltimore, Oct. 6, 1791 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 J 2, draft); Bentley, *Diary*, I, 318; cf. also Nov. 12, 1791, in unprinted *Belknap Papers*, Mass. Hist. Soc.; Dilhet-Browne, *Etat de l'Eglise* (Washington, 1922), p. 21.

Catholics. On Wednesday, November 24, 1790, the *Columbian Centinel* carried an announcement that Father Thayer would give an exposition of the Catholic Faith in any of the neighboring towns to which he would be invited.

Mr. Thayer, Catholick Priest of Boston, fully persuaded that he has found the inestimable treasure of the Gospel, is greatly desirous of imparting it to his dear countrymen. For this purpose, he offers to preach on the evenings of week-days, in any of the neighbouring towns. If any persons desire to hear the exposition of the Catholic faith (of which the majority of Americans have so mistaken an idea) and will furnish any place for accommodation of the hearers, Mr. Thayer will be ever ready to attend them. He will also undertake to answer the objections any gentleman would wish to make, either publicly or privately, to the doctrine he preaches; and promises that if any one can convince him he is in error, he will make as publick and solemn a recantation of his present belief, as he has done of the Protestant religion in which he was educated. Freely he has received — freely he gives.

John Thayer, Catholick Missionary of Boston. N.B. He may be seen every morning at half-past nine, at his Church, in School Street, or at other hours he may be found at his lodgings, No. 82 Newbury Street.<sup>87</sup>

This "challenge of Father Thayer," as it came to be called, was plainly an advertisement, intended to attract attention. Indeed, it turned out to be the initial step in a long series of controversies which filled the whole of his pastorate in Boston and which, in the end, determined his place in Boston minds. At first, however, hardly a ripple resulted in newspaper circles. Only one comment appeared by way of immediate answer, and it was couched in terms of irony and almost contempt. Also, it was anonymous.<sup>88</sup>

Nothing more was printed about this matter for some three weeks. It was almost as if a conspiracy existed to ignore Father Thayer. The Boston ministers manifested no desire of coöperating with his supposed intention of "blowing up the Flames

<sup>87</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Nov. 24, 1790.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 27, 1790.

of Discord." They were, in large part, "liberals," vaguely tending toward Unitarianism, and generally marked by an aversion to controversy. Indeed, when an answer to the Catholic priest did appear, it came not from Boston or thereabouts, but from New Hampshire. On January 17th, the *Boston Gazette* copied from a Newburyport paper an item that was already almost a month old. It read: "From the Essex Journal of Dec. 22, 1790, Newburyport, Dec. 1, 1790: As the Gauntlet is thrown by Mr. John Thayer in favor of the Church of Rome, the challenge is accepted by GEORGE LESLIE, Pastor of the Church in Washington, N.H." <sup>39</sup>

On the 19th of January, *The Centinel* copied the same news item, and added, "We have not learned where the field of action is pitched upon, or who are to be the seconds."

Father Thayer immediately acknowledged Mr. Leslie's acceptance and published his own answer in *The Centinel* of January 26th. After noting that he had "observed among several Protestants an air of triumph at Mr. Leslie's advertisement," the priest continued:

In mine of the 24th of November, I only offered to preach in the towns bordering on Boston, and to answer every objection that might be made to the doctrine I deliver — yet, as Mr. Leslie takes what I then wrote for the gauntlet thrown, I now invite him or any other Minister to appoint me a time and place in Boston, or any of the neighbouring towns, for the combat proposed; I will punctually attend, and I engage to answer every objection against the *discriminating* points of

<sup>39</sup> Rev. George Lesslie was born in Coleraine, County Londonderry, Ireland, in 1727. When he was but two years of age, his family came to America and settled in Topsfield, Massachusetts. George graduated from Harvard in 1748, and in 1749 was settled minister at Linebrook (a section of Ipswich, Topsfield, and Rowley), where from 1752 on he also conducted a boarding-school. In 1780, he transferred to Washington, New Hampshire. Felt's *History of Ipswich* says of him, "He fitted many pupils for college . . . he had a strong mind, was a noted scholar and a pious minister." Bentley wrote in his *Diary*, in October, 1811, "Mr. Lesslie's manners were singular, but Mr. Thayer . . . told me his mind was powerful." Mr. Lesslie died in 1810. Cf. M. V. B. Perley, in *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute*, vol. LI, and reprinted separately, Salem, 1815. Although the name is correctly spelled Lessley, the form found in the newspapers is followed here.

Catholick Faith, and, if convinced of error, to publicly and solemnly abjure it. Let it be observed that I do not undertake to defend all those articles which our adversaries, out of their abundant liberality, and for reasons best known to themselves, have added to our Creed, as, *the Pope's infallibility, and adoration of the saints and of their images and relicks, and breach of faith with hereticks*, &c. I stand forth in defence of the genuine Popery which is taught in all the councils, catechisms and schools of the Universal Church — I not only offer this publick disputation, but I even conjure the Ministers, if they have real love to souls, to accept it, that the eyes of the people who are kept in darkness may be opened to the light — I also desire them to come armed with all the arguments which Tillotson, and other champions of Protestancy have ever used in its behalf.

He then announced that he would “open a controversial Lecture, at the Catholick Church, to begin from tomorrow evening, at half-past six o'clock,” and invited “all who love the truth and sincerely desire salvation, to attend.” Almost as an afterthought, the priest stated: “Perhaps Mr. Leslie's desire is to dispute in the publick papers — If this be the design of his challenge, I will begin as soon as any Printer will consent to give our controversies a place — I am prepared for every honest measure that will tend to enlarge the empire of truth and religion.”<sup>40</sup>

On Thursday, January 27, 1791, Father Thayer, “in expectation of some opponent,” began a controversial lecture at the Catholic church. But no antagonist appeared;<sup>41</sup> nor was there any such present at the usual Sunday evening sermon. An attempt to explain and defend Boston's silence took the form of a sarcastic communication to *The Centinel* published on the following Wednesday, February 2, 1791. Besides attacking Father Thayer's character, it brought up the old picture of a prejudiced Church, claiming infallible authority, prohibiting the use of the Bible, delighting in persecution and bloodshed, and all the rest. At the same time, however, the article's pre-

<sup>40</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Jan. 26, 1791.

<sup>41</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, I, 232.



tended irony included in its criticism the Protestant clergy, who "cannot be expected to take up this cause, because neither their reputation, influence or property be affected by the universal spread of the Roman Catholick Religion."<sup>42</sup>

Father Thayer, who was evidently given the courtesy of reading the communication before it was printed, made the short reply that he had an inviolable rule "to despise anonymous productions which are filled with scurrility."<sup>43</sup> There were then but two or three other anonymous gibes publicly flung at the priest, even when the news appeared that the *Essex Journal* of Newburyport would publish the Thayer-Leslie disputations gratis.<sup>44</sup>

The controversy attracted attention in other places too. "A friend in the Protestant camp," wrote from New Jersey, advising Mr. Leslie to lay aside whatever "appendages of Popery" might cleave to his own religion, "as they will be found an unwieldy and dangerous part of his armor." He wished "the swaggering popish emissary" to "fall like Goliath," but he also wished his "brother David" to go forth "with only the sling and stones of Scripture authority."<sup>45</sup>

On the other hand, a letter of quite different tone had appeared in *The Centinel* of February 19th. It was written from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, probably by the Episcopal minister of that town, who, it was said "publicly defended Mr. Thayer's right to avow and defend his character and opinion. But the Illuminate most unfairly attempted to blast him secretly in the esteem of the Bishop of Baltimore, his superior."<sup>46</sup>

The Protestant rector's text began with the explanation:

To Mr. John Thayer:

Sir: I have viewed with sorrow the attacks upon your person, in the publick papers. This is a species of persecution of the most cruel kind, and too dangerous in its consequences for the

<sup>42</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 2, 1791. <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, Feb. 8, 11, 1791; *Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 5, 9, 1791. *The Controversial Writings of John Thayer* (Boston, 1793?), p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, March 19, 1791.

<sup>46</sup> Cited from *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VI (1889), 179.

public to submit to; it ought to be spurned out of the world. It results from a cowardly temper in its authors and abettors — is a disgrace to this country, which professes to entertain a most sacred regard for the rights of their fellow men, and whose greatest glory, and most perfect policy, is to protect all classes of christian professions and all religions. Your adversaries appear, meanly to consider their causes as weak, or why do they have recourse to so feeble a method to support it? The good sense of your amiable Bishop, as well as that of your Church and the States at large, must lead them to double attention to your interest and honour, when they see you, thus illy-treated in a free country.

The best way to bring you, and all who have not embraced Protestantism to love and unite with it, is by praising your good name, treating you with tenderness, presenting truth before you, and setting a good example in every christian and political virtue by praying for, and not by undermining you secretly and cowardly.

A Protestant.<sup>47</sup>

Bishop Carroll, on his side, had not been pleased. On February 22nd, he had instructed his secretary to blame Father Thayer

for advertising controversial lectures & undertaking to answer publicly all objections. For a step of so much consequence, he should have advised first with his bishop. Cite Benedict 14th, brief of 1753. Perhaps he [the Bishop] carried caution too far, but Mr. Thayer's undertaking was too rash and dangerous, etc.<sup>48</sup>

Before Father Thayer received the Bishop's letter, he had already sent his first contribution to the *Essex Journal* (under date of February 21, 1791). It took the form of an abridgment of the Catholic Faith, which would serve "to avoid all misrepresentations of our doctrines." This introductory paper set forth ten points of Catholic belief, and concluded with the words:

<sup>47</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 19, 1791.

<sup>48</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, Feb. 22, 1791.

These are our real principles, taught by our Church in her councils, and learned by her children in their catechisms. . . . These true Catholic principles, we are ready not only to sign with our hand, but if called to it and assisted by divine grace, to seal also with our blood. The tenets, which are here briefly exposed, I am ready to defend against Mr. Leslie or any other Protestant whether he produces his real name or not, provided he be fair and candid in his statement of facts and points of faith. God, the great scrutinizer of all hearts, shall be the judge of the purity of my intentions; let every reader judge of the weight of the arguments which I shall urge.<sup>49</sup>

Father Thayer's ten points neatly summed up those fundamentals of Catholicity which had for generations been frequently brought into question by Protestants in both Old and New England:

1st, the distinction between Adoration which Catholics give to God, and Veneration, which they accord to the Blessed Virgin and other saints and to their relics and images.

2nd, the place of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Catholic belief and practice, as the only Redeemer and Mediator of both Redemption and Intercession; and the relation to this belief of Catholic prayers to angels and saints.

3rd, the Catholic attitude to Holy Scripture and Tradition.

4th, the Catholic belief in Seven Sacraments, and

5th, particularly in the Holy Eucharist.

6th, the Catholic belief about the Law of God, and about its relation to the Law of the Church.

7th, Catholic insistence upon Contrition, and Catholic understanding of Indulgences.

8th, the Catholic doctrine of relations with heretics (a point so important in the view of many non-Catholics that it is here quoted word for word):

Our faith teaches us to detest all massacres, treasons and murders whatever, whether committed by Protestants against Catholics, or by Catholics against Protestants. We regard them as the worst of crimes that can be committed betwixt man and

<sup>49</sup> Reprinted in *Argus* of Aug. 16, 1791.

man, and such as cannot be justified by any pretext of religion. And so far are Catholics from thinking it no sin to murder heretics (which is so falsely and unjustly imputed to them) that in all kingdoms and states, which profess the Catholic religion, any such murderer of heretics must expect nothing but death by the laws of the country, and, if he dies impenitent, eternal damnation, according to the doctrine of his Church.

9th, the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory.

10th, Catholic belief about the Faith in and the merits of Christ.<sup>50</sup>

No immediate reply came from Mr. Leslie. In the meantime, Father Thayer continued his Sunday evening sermons and possibly those on Thursday evenings also. As March turned into April, and no answer to the priest's essay appeared in the press, several sharp criticisms of his opponent's delay kept the fact of the controversy before the public. The *Herald of Freedom* carried a reminder that "Protestantism has not yet opposed the Apostolick Popish Divine. Champion Leslie is slow in his movements and has not yet appeared in print." The same paper raised the point again in the issue of May 6th: <sup>51</sup> "How happens it that John Thayer, the Popish Champion, still remains unanswered? Where is the Rev. Mr. Leslie hid? Does he dread the whip of Infallibility? Or does not the Missionary fight fair?" In fact, it was only after Bishop Carroll had made his memorable visit to Boston that *The Centinel* announced (June 18th): "The Rev. Mr. Leslie will begin his refutation of the Rev. Mr. Thayer's principles in the next Newbury-Port paper."

At the time of the Bishop's departure, Father Thayer was still unacquainted with any reply from the New Hampshire minister. In his public announcement of his own establishment by the Bishop as sole pastor in Boston, Father Thayer included the statement that he would "presevere in publishing with all freedom the defense of his tenets, whether Mr. Leslie or any other Protestant Champions attack him or not." He evidently

<sup>50</sup> *Controversial Works* . . . (Boston, 1793), p. 8.

<sup>51</sup> *Herald of Freedom*.



had not been forbidden to do so by the Bishop: the rest of the announcement sufficiently reflects the Bishop's advice:

[Father Thayer] continually exculpates himself in company for any intention of blowing up the Flames of Discord, with which he is, sometimes charged. He declares that his only aim is the diffusion of Light, in order to dispel what he calls, Prevailing Errors. Nor does he see, why points of Religion cannot be discussed with as much calmness and charity as any other objects of impartial inquiry. This could be accomplished, if the disputants were careful to avoid all personalities and invectives; which, as he has already publicly announced, will be his inviolable practice. The Religion he defends, as he justly observes, will stand or fall according to its own intrinsic merits.<sup>52</sup>

Mr. Leslie's long-awaited reply, which appeared in the *Essex Journal* (reprinted in the *Salem Gazette* of July 19, 1791), suggested that the properest method

of conducting the controversy would be to take some one point and go through with that before we proceed to another. . . . No arguments will be . . . treated as worthy of notice but such as are evidently drawn from and grounded upon the Sacred Scriptures. . . . He thereupon chose the subject Infallibility as the weak point in Catholic claims.

After Mr. Leslie's first article, Father Thayer at once began his defense of the Church's claim to infallibility. He carried it out admirably. There cannot be the slightest doubt that in this type of writing Father Thayer was at his best. His courtesy to the opposition was marked. His writing was likewise clear and objective. He presented his material logically, clearly, impersonally, almost coldly, and with complete success in his evident attempt to refrain from any abuse.

In his consideration of Mr. Leslie's third objection, namely, "That Catholics know not where to find that infallibility which they assert to exist among them," Father Thayer made an observation which may seem strange to the present day. Having

<sup>52</sup> *Herald of Freedom*, June 24, 1791.

correctly asserted that "All Catholics on the globe are fully agreed, &c.; that the infallibility which we attribute to our church resides in the majority of the Bishops (the successors of the Apostles) united with their visible head, the Pope, whether they be assembled in council or not," Father Thayer went on to state, quite as correctly for his day:

Some divines indeed carry their respect for the sovereign Pontiff so far as to suppose that Christ will never suffer him to propose any thing to the church as of faith, which is contrary to divine revelation; or in other words, that he is infallible. But this is only an opinion, which every one is free to believe or reject, according as the arguments for or against it, strike his mind. The difference we make between points of faith and of mere opinions is that the first must be believed under pain of our being regarded as heretics. . . .

The infallibility of the Pope was not defined Catholic doctrine in Father Thayer's day.

Father Thayer's diverse proofs of the Church's infallibility appeared week by week in the *Essex Journal* and were copied into the *Salem Gazette* from July 26th to September 28th (supplementary articles appeared there also on October 4th and 11th). The whole controversy was also partially reprinted in the *Boston Argus*, which acted upon its belief "in the importance of universally disseminating religious knowledge."<sup>53</sup>

As the Catholic priest's articles were drawing to a close, with never a reply from the Protestant champion, several small newspaper items reflected one or other kind of reaction.

The Rev. Mr. Leslie, the writer of *Protestant Bulls*, is a *slow worm* at composition. Missionary Thayer writes with much celerity, and flounders any where he likes. Parson Leslie thinks "*least said, soonest mended.*"<sup>54</sup>

It is not true, as is reported, that the Rev. Mr. Thayer, Catholic Minister, &c, is to be appointed to the Professorship 'of

<sup>53</sup> *The Argus* reprints were not entire. See Aug. 16, 19, 26, Sept. 6, 13, 16, 27, 30, 1791, and Oct. 4th, Father Thayer's reply to the Query on Purgatory.

<sup>54</sup> *Argus*, Sept. 6, 1791.

Divinity of Cambridge, vacated by the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Wiggelsworth.<sup>55</sup>

The *Salem Gazette* itself, on September 27th, printed an item, reading:

It cannot but be suspected that Mr. Leslie has received some *new light* from the investigations of Mr. Thayer, and has or is about to enlist under the banner of the Triple Crown; for silence is generally thought to be a proof of defeat. . . .

These constant barbs drew a reply in favor of Mr. Leslie from a contributor to the *Salem Gazette* (October 18th), who strangely fused the Protestant "right of private judgment" with the American Constitution's "essential rights of men," in contrast to the Catholic Church's authority as an infallible body. This implication was later drawn out into an assertion that Protestant and American principles were identical: "Is Thayer such a simpleton as to think of prevailing . . . with the citizens of these United States to part with the fundamental right of men to judge for themselves in matters of everlasting importance?" The contributor did not reflect that the citizens of these United States had just voted to ratify a Bill of Rights, and thus parted with their own rights to judge for themselves in some matters of everlasting importance.

A much milder explanation of Mr. Leslie's delay was offered to the public on October 21, 1791. Mr. Leslie had never received Father Thayer's article — there had been some difficulty respecting the conveyance of the papers.<sup>56</sup> The Catholic missionary went South that autumn without hearing anything more from the New Hampshire minister.

## V.

Mr. Leslie was not the only person to take up "the gauntlet" against Father Thayer. Besides the authors of the shorter newspaper items, there were two other people who carried on lesser

<sup>55</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 10, 1791.

<sup>56</sup> *Argus*, Oct. 21, 1791; *Salem Gazette*, Oct. 25, 1791.

controversies. There was first the person who signed himself "A searcher after truth" and "Jedediah Adams," and who published two articles in ridicule of the rubrics of the Missal, respecting the consecration of the Host.<sup>57</sup> Father Thayer answered these<sup>58</sup> straightforwardly and gave good arguments to show that "the supposed ridiculous absurdity in our rule . . . in one instance is as imputable to the protestants as to us, and in another, arises wholly out of misrepresentation." Nor was the priest slow to throw back on his adversary a further charge of finding "something indelicate in our Rubric."

Another antagonist was the "Querist" in the *Essex Journal*, who opposed Father Thayer on the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory. Two articles on each side made up the total extent of this particular disputation. Short-lived as it was, a rather special interest attaches to it, for the reason that the Querist was possibly the Rev. Mr. Bentley. This particular passage at arms was courteously carried on by both sides.<sup>59</sup>

While Father Thayer was in the South, he had the controversy between himself and Mr. Leslie published in book form.<sup>60</sup> In Boston itself, despite the Catholic priest's absence from the city, the controversy and its principles were not forgotten.

A poem that appeared in *The Centinel*, January 7, 1792, carried on the tradition of ironical treatment of the priest:

I will write against all Plays,  
Altho' I'm a Player,  
For I strolled many days  
By advice of Pope Thayer,

Who by the help of the good Bishop Bossuet, lately became  
the very perspicacious decypherer and most unanswerable

<sup>57</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, July 2, and Aug. 6, 1791.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, July 30, and Aug. 10, 1791.

<sup>59</sup> *Controversial Works* (Boston, 1793), pp. 74 ff. Mr. Bentley (*Diary*, I, 292) wrote "several queries to be communicated to the Printer [of the *Gazette*] on" one passage from Father Thayer's answer to Mr. Leslie, Aug. 30, 1791. He may well have written other queries also. *The Argus* printed Father Thayer's article on Purgatory, Oct. 4, 1791.

<sup>60</sup> The book is marked "Georgetown (Potowmack) Printed by Alexander Doyle, 1791." Cf. Wilfred Parsons, *Early Catholic Americana* (New York, 1939), p. 26. A copy is in Georgetown University Library.



demonstrator of the incontrovertible infallibility of his Holy Roman Catholick Church; to which he was wonderfully converted by the miracle-making bones of the blessed Saint Benedict de Labre.<sup>61</sup>

Mr. Leslie, too, continued to receive unfavorable attention, as if he had been convinced by Father Thayer's arguments and become a Catholic.<sup>62</sup> A statement was issued denying the "conversion" rumor and promising a forthcoming reply to the priest's arguments. Nevertheless, the promised article by Mr. Leslie did not appear; in fact, that opponent never published any further reply to Father Thayer; "whether because he realized himself outclassed, or because he was advised to do so by others of the clergy, cannot be determined."<sup>63</sup>

Father Thayer returned to Boston from the South on May 21, 1792, and shortly afterwards took note of the situation by addressing a public letter to the minister:

Rev. Sir,

I have, I think, answered all your objections against the infallibility of the church; I have expected your reply for a full year; and as none has appeared, I have a right to conclude that you do not find the Catholic doctrine on this point totally unscriptural and absurd.

The priest then went on with a long dissertation on "those marks which so evidently distinguish the Roman church from all others, as to prove her *alone* to be founded by Jesus Christ."<sup>64</sup> No reply to this publication was received: the Leslie-Thayer controversy was definitely finished.

The reason for Father Thayer's unexpected return to Boston in the middle of May, 1792, appeared in *The Argus* on May 25th. A certain Mrs. Ann Bright, widow of the deceased Richard Bright, had come to believe in the Catholic Church, and, being very ill, sent Father Thayer a pressing request to

<sup>61</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Jan. 7, 1792.

<sup>62</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Feb. 13, 1792; *Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 15, Feb. 22, April 4, 1792; Bentley, *Diary*, I, 357.

<sup>63</sup> Merritt, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

<sup>64</sup> *Controversial Writings* (Boston, 1793), pp. 40 to 74.

visit her. He took the long journey of six hundred miles to Boston, and as soon as she saw him, she declared her steady and unwavering belief in the Catholic articles of faith, and was formally received into the Church by Father Thayer. Her death followed in a matter of two days, but her relatives insisted on a Protestant funeral. The priest wrote up the story in *The Argus*; he also celebrated a requiem Mass for her, and at it delivered a sermon on the happy death of the just. This eulogy, somewhat over-panegyric in style, was a soundly religious effort, without the slightest allusion to controversy. Shortly after the two articles about Mrs. Bright's death and funeral, which appeared in *The Argus* (May 25, 29, 1791), the priest began to contribute with fair regularity to that newspaper. Three articles from his pen appeared in June (19th, 22nd, 26th) and one in July (3rd). Those printed in June were concerned with a letter "from a young student in France to a Friend in America, giving him an Account of his Conversion to the Roman Catholic Faith." (The student was not Thayer himself; there are some reasons to think that it might have been Samuel Breck.) The July 3rd article was an essay on the Apostolicity of the Church. From then on, the priest published a series of articles which attracted little or no attention, either then or since, although they deserve much. These articles, twelve in all, appearing in *The Argus*, weekly from July 3rd to October 2nd, under the caption "The Monitor," were short moral and spiritual considerations of the very highest spiritual content and of remarkable literary merit. The human passions, the place of religion in our ordinary employments, the value of remembering death, the dignity of the Word of God, the growth of infidelity in our days, the miracles of Jesus, the hope of Heaven, the advantages of retirement (retreat), the children of this world and the children of light — these were the spiritual subjects which helped to keep Father Thayer's pen busy in Boston during the last months of his pastorate there. All the articles were signed J. T.

The series was introduced by the editor of *The Argus* with the explanation, "Whenever any ingenious, literary or classical

correspondent favors us with as good reflections as the following, they shall readily have a place in *The Argus*."

There were other controversies: a very short one with the interesting Simplex,<sup>65</sup> and another, not so short, with the vulgar J. G (ardiner). The public was not slow to recognize where the advantage lay in this last debate. It witnessed Gardiner's crest-fallen withdrawal from the field of battle. It acknowledged that the priest had the palm of victory over these two antagonists "from the single circumstance that he writes with coolness, conciseness and argument, added to a great degree of deference, decency and respect for their abilities and character."<sup>66</sup>

One of the more recent biographers of Father Thayer concludes his story of the controversies with the words:

On the whole, Mr. Thayer presents a much better figure in these various theological controversies than in his disputes with his colleague, de Rousselet, or in his correspondence at various times with his Superior, Bishop Carroll. Both in style of argument and in manner, he showed himself superior to his principal antagonists. He devoted himself entirely to the exposition and defense of his creed and faith, and did not descend to abusive personalities.<sup>67</sup>

The echoes of the paper war continued for the rest of the summer, but Father Thayer no longer signed any controversial item, if, indeed, he submitted any. What appeared in the newspapers bore the signature of others.

The last "Monitor" article in *The Argus* was published October 2nd, and was followed by the note:

The foregoing, we are sorry to say, is the last Monitor for this season from the same hand, as the Catholic Missionary who, during this summer has filled our Monitorial Department, is just about setting out for his winter quarters at the Southland.

Father Thayer left Boston in late October, 1792. His last Boston baptism in the register for that year is dated October 9th. By December 25th, he was already in Norfolk, Virginia.

<sup>65</sup> *Argus*, July 10, 17, 31, 1792.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, July 31, 1792.

<sup>67</sup> Merritt, *Sketches*, p. 223.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SECOND FOUNDATION (1792-1796)

ON AUGUST 20, 1792, a new era opened in the history of Boston and New England Catholicity. That day there arrived in the city the saintly Rev. Francis Anthony Matignon, to whose twenty-six years of inspiring priestly activity here all New England Catholics look back with reverent gratitude. He was truly the second founder of this church. Tactful healer of schism, gentle remover of prejudice, zealous pastor of souls, prudent administrator of a pitifully meagre church revenue, builder of our first church, constant friend and legatee of Father Thayer, spiritual guide of Father Cheverus, and finally the solid support of Bishop Carroll, and his choice as first Bishop for the New England territory, Father Matignon justly lays claim to our veneration.

Despite all this, he is too little known. It was characteristic of the man to avoid the fame of this world. Even in Boston in the generation immediately after his death it was said by a noted convert to the Catholic Church:

The name of Cardinal Cheverus has become incorporated with the history of the Church, and his fame is blazoned in the tablets of lasting renown; but that of the saintly (and we fully believe) sainted Matignon — however deeply it may be engraved in the hearts of those who had the happiness to know him — is but little known beyond this privileged circle. . . . There does not exist a [single] portrait or anything which is a likeness of Dr. Matignon, that we are acquainted with — and most of his biography that we have ever seen embodied, is contained in the Obituary [notice].<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. B. C. Greene, in *Young Catholic's Friend*, for Aug. 26, 1840. Correct information about Father Matignon during the four years previous to Father Cheverus' arrival is almost completely lacking. No letters of his before June 24, 1796, have been preserved. The story of his activity here up to that time must be pieced together chiefly from his baptismal and marriage register, and from his account books, with the help of some scattered references in the letters of Bishop Carroll and Father Thayer.



## I

Francis Anthony Matignon was born in Paris on November 10, 1753, of a middle-class family, engaged in the jewelry trade.<sup>2</sup> The other children — there were at least three others — carried on the family vocation, but Francis Anthony, who was the oldest, studied for the priesthood. "From his earliest youth, his piety was conspicuous and his progress in studies rapid." He took the courses leading to a degree in theology at the Sorbonne, and was already a bachelor of divinity when he was ordained a priest on Ember Saturday, the 19th of September, 1778. He returned to the University to pursue higher studies in theology in 1780, and was admitted to the licentiate in 1782. Finally in 1785, he received his doctorate.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly afterwards (by August 2, 1786) he was made a member of the faculty of the famous theological college of Navarre,<sup>4</sup> friendly rival of the Sorbonne itself.<sup>5</sup> In his new position<sup>6</sup> Father Matignon, although his health was delicate, gave proof on every occasion of zeal and talent. Thus he came "to the notice of a Prelate in great credit at the French court [the Cardinal De Brienne], who obtained for him the grant of an annuity from Louis XVI, which was sufficient for all his wants,

<sup>2</sup> Vital Statistics from Paris Archives: copies in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

<sup>3</sup> Obituary, *New England Galaxy*, Sept. 25, 1818.

<sup>4</sup> It is not known where he lived during those years of his priesthood, possibly he was living and teaching at the Collège de Navarre. Some connection with that institution during the period 1780-1786 would help explain his appointment there as a professor after he received his final degree in theology. The *Journal de Paris* on June 4, 1785, announced the deaths of Abbé Wallet, chaplain and professor at the Collège de Navarre, and of Abbé Rousseau, "professeur à Navarre."

<sup>5</sup> For very interesting information on the College of Navarre, cf. A. C. Sabatie, *Les Massacres de Septembre* (Paris, 1912); and *Mémoires de l'abbé Boston* (Paris, 1897).

<sup>6</sup> *Almanach Royal* for 1787, p. 491. On Aug. 2, 1786, Dr. Matignon signed an official document, together with other doctors of the Royal Society of Navarre (*Arch. Nat.*, H 3 2755, copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*). J. Dilhet, *Etat de l'Eglise Catholique* (P. W. Browne, ed.: Washington, 1922), p. 54. "M. Matignon prêtre français, docteur de Sorbonne, professeur de la langue hébraïque, ou chaire d'Orléans, curé missionnaire de l'Eglise de Ste. Croix à Boston." On p. 18, Dilhet also says of Matignon, "docteur de Sorbonne et ancien professeur de la chaire d'Orléans." It means, I believe, that Dr. Matignon occupied the Orleans chair of Scripture at the College of Navarre.

established him in independence, and took away all anxiety for the future.”<sup>7</sup> The grant was probably connected with his formal appointment to the Orleans professorship of Sacred Scripture in the College of Navarre, which Dr. Matignon received in August, 1787. In the recommendation of him to this position, it was stated “that the post to which His Majesty is now asked to name him will give him the opportunity of further justifying the reputation which he has already acquired.”<sup>8</sup> Dr. Matignon’s Scripture course was one of the two afternoon courses at the graduate school.

Besides teaching, Dr. Matignon also heard the confessions of the students, and even of some who came from other colleges. Among the latter was the young John Cheverus, at that time a student in the Collège Louis-le-Grand and destined to be Father Matignon’s companion and co-worker for the last two decades of his life.<sup>9</sup>

When the French Revolutionary Government adopted the so-called Civil Constitution of the Clergy and demanded that all clerics take an oath to support it, Father Matignon, along with the other professors of theology, both at Navarre and the Sorbonne, refused to comply. And when, in consequence, the Paris Directory on October 17, 1791, ordered both these famous schools of theology to be closed, Dr. Matignon was one of those who took advantage of this decree to make an open profession of their faith.

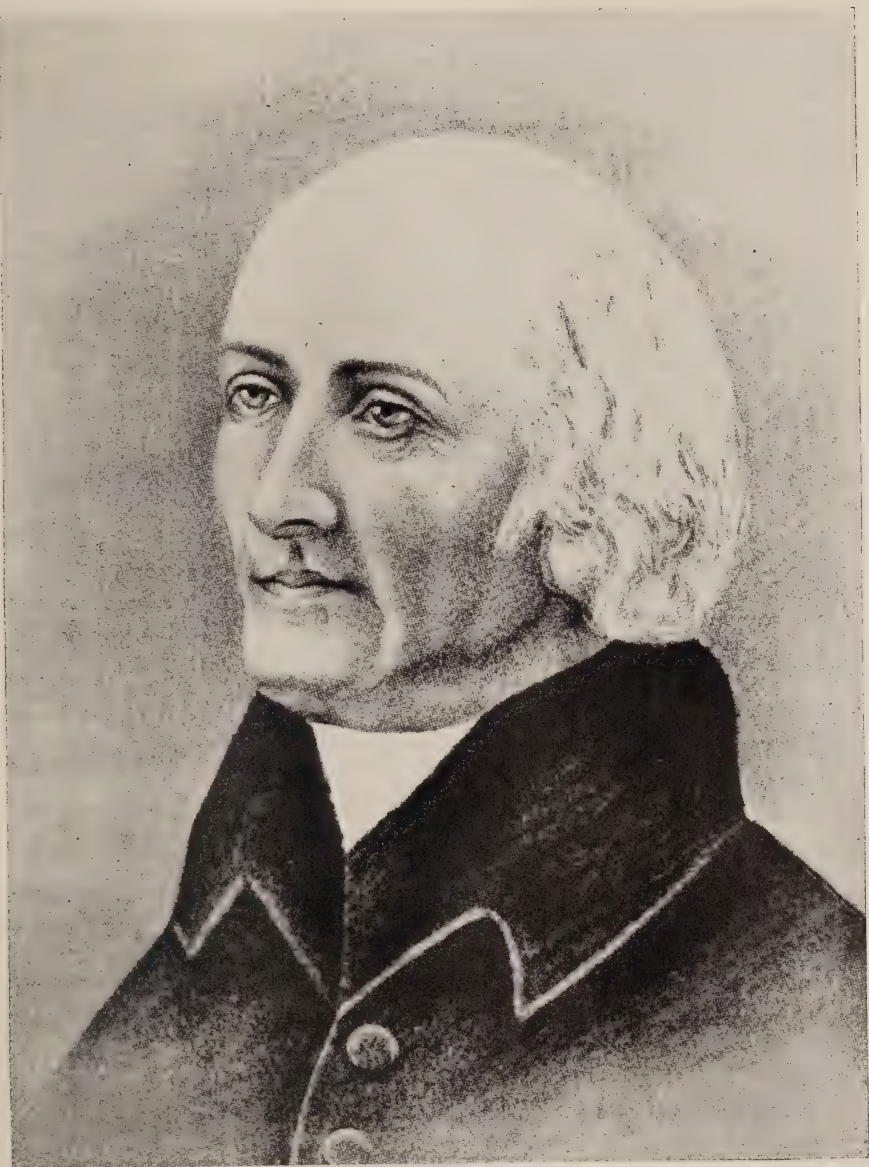
In a clear, strong statement of the principles which guided this decision, they made public what was both their own official protest and their last public lecture in theology. They regarded it

not only as a precious and authentic evidence of this faculty’s inviolable attachment both to the See of St. Peter and to the legitimate pastors of the French Church, but also as an expression of conviction, the less to be suspected, since this faculty

<sup>7</sup> Obituary notice.

<sup>8</sup> *Arch. Nat.*, Aug. 5, 1787 (O 280, no. 73).

<sup>9</sup> It is just possible that Father Matignon was already a resident at Navarre during the winter of 1783-1784, and thus would have made the acquaintance of John Thayer.



FATHER MATIGNON





has never been accused of exaggerating the rights of the Holy See or the Episcopate. From it as from a pure source, we have drawn the teachings which we give in our schools.

If we had been culpable and weak enough to desert both and to take the oath, the annals of this faculty and the very words of our lectures would furnish the disgraceful proof of our own condemnation.

Such a cowardly desertion would have rendered us unworthy of the honorable office which we fulfil in its name and unworthy even of our own self respect.

And lastly, our shameful fall would have been a scandal for the young levites, confided to our care, who are the more dear to our hearts, because they are the loveliest hope of the Church. No! we can say with Eleazar, "it doth not become us to dissemble," and we owe to young folk this example of our fortitude in the faith. . . .<sup>10</sup>

That profession of faith gives a definite picture of the religious convictions of Father Matignon, who, like many others of his clerical brethren at that time, was obliged, for conscience' sake, to flee his native land.

The signs of the future were only too clearly manifested by the decree of the Legislative Assembly passed on November 29, 1791, that all priests in France must take the oath within a week, under pain of being arrested on the charge of counter-revolutionary activity.

Shortly after signing the protest against the oath, Father Matignon betook himself to England. He remained there, however, only a few months, not quite five at the most. By early April, 1792, he was back in Paris preparing to sail for the American mission.

What individual circumstance determined the zealous priest to come to the aid of our infant church is not known. The definite incentive might have come from any one of several sources with which he was in contact. In London, for example, he came to know some of Bishop Carroll's former brethren of the Society of Jesus, especially Father Thomas Talbot, who

<sup>10</sup> 2 *Mach.*, VI, 24. *Lettre des Professeurs en Théologie de Sorbonne et de Navarre* . . . (Paris, 1791), pamphlet, in *Harvard College Library*.

were active in the work of relief for the French refugee clergy. From them he would have learned among other things that the American Bishop was eager to have at Boston "a clergyman of amiable conciliating manners as well as of real ability."<sup>11</sup> They in turn would have been keen to recommend Father Matignon for this place, recognizing in him as they did a person uniquely fitted for it. He made an extraordinary impression on Father Talbot, who in a subsequent letter to Bishop Carroll spoke of the thousands of excellent men driven to England by the French persecution and added, "but I find no Matignon among them."<sup>12</sup>

Father Matignon was also in contact with the French Sulpicians, to whose Superior, M. Emery, Bishop Carroll had also recently written a letter about the needs of the American Church. At least one part of that letter had been printed in the French papers, where it attracted the attention of a certain Sulpician, Father François Ciquart, a former missionary of the Canadian Indians, and persuaded him to go again to America. Perchance the same letter had its share in attracting Father Matignon's attention to the American Church. In any case, when he had decided to come to America, it was with Father Ciquart and two other Sulpicians that he set sail.<sup>13</sup>

In preparation for his departure, Father Matignon purchased in Paris a chalice, ciborium, and pyxes for the Blessed Sacrament and the Holy Oils, as well as some vestments. Besides this, he brought with him from France a considerable number of books, "for the use of his congregation and his successors."<sup>14</sup>

It is not improbable that he made his purchases of the church vessels from some member of his own family, who were, as has been said, in the jewelry business. At any rate, to pay for his purchases and other necessary expenses, he had available at

<sup>11</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Plowden, June 11, 1791 (*Fordham Arch.*, 202 B 36).

<sup>12</sup> B. U. Campbell, in *U.S. Cath. Mag.*, VIII (1849), 165 ff.; C. Moreau, *Les Prêtres français émigrés* (Paris, 1856), 251; copies Campbell, *op. cit.*, but not quite correctly.

<sup>13</sup> Father Ciquart's Biography, ms. in *Baltimore Sem. Arch.*

<sup>14</sup> Father Matignon's Account Book (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

least the sum of 982 livres, his share of the salaries allowed by the Government for the previous year, dating from January 1, 1791, to October 22, 1791, when the professors had been ordered to cease their function.<sup>15</sup>

Undoubtedly, Father Matignon also had other money, either from his own savings or from his family, for whom he always manifested a touching fraternal charity. It is not out of place to record here that after his arrival in Boston, he sent a contribution to the relief fund for French clergy in England; and that in later life he provided an annuity for a brother and sister.

He set sail for America from Havre on Easter Monday, April 9, 1792. For traveling companions he had, besides Father Ciquart, two other Sulpicians, Father Gabriel Richard, who was later a missionary to the Illinois country, and the newly ordained Father Ambrose Maréchal, who was later Archbishop of Baltimore. They had a long and arduous voyage of ten weeks.

Finally, on June 24, 1792, they arrived at Baltimore and were received by the clergy there with great joy. Bishop Carroll, who was out of the city at the time, soon returned to add his own special welcome. He assigned Father Matignon to Boston and Father Ciquart to the Maine Indians. The warm days of July were spent mostly in the company of the chief pastor, who informed them of the state of their respective fields of labor and his own high hopes for their success. Then on August 8th, Fathers Matignon and Ciquart, consoled by the Bishop's blessing and fortified by his letters, set out for New England.<sup>16</sup>

## II

They arrived in Boston on August 20th. Father Matignon immediately took charge of the parish.<sup>17</sup> He was then a man thirty-eight years of age, who had been ordained some thirteen

<sup>15</sup> *Arch. Nat.*, F 4 1301.

<sup>16</sup> Biography of Father Ciquart, ms. in *Baltimore Sem. Arch.*

<sup>17</sup> The Bishop also gave Father Matignon fifty dollars to help out with his expenses (Bishop Carroll to Father Matignon, Dec. 29, 1792, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

years: a holy, learned, and zealous priest. He had Catholic convictions of the most exact theological correctness; he was conversant with the Holy Scriptures in the ways proper to scholars, even to the extent of a teaching knowledge of Hebrew. He was likewise a truly humble man, and he had come to America for the love of God and the Church.

One of his contemporaries, himself a French missionary priest in Baltimore and Detroit, described the new Boston pastor as "endowed with all the qualities requisite to accomplish great things for the Church. He possessed extraordinary ability together with great piety, ardent zeal, remarkably great prudence and an exquisite courtesy which attracted everybody. He was consequently successful beyond his most ardent expectations. . . ." <sup>18</sup>

At the date of Father Matignon's arrival in Boston, an organized church with a priest at its head had been in existence here some four years. Nevertheless, it counted in its membership barely a handful of the literally hundreds of persons both French and Irish who, from our viewpoint, may be considered as Catholics. Even those were divided among themselves.

Father Matignon's problem in Boston was to overcome, or at least to counteract, the evil done to the Catholic religion by his predecessors. Specifically, he had to heal the schism which the rivalries and indiscretions of Fathers Thayer and Rousselet had inflamed, and at the same time he had to undo the earlier injury inflicted on the Church here by the unworthy character of Father La Poterie. Nor was this the full extent of his problems. There was likewise a need to overcome the innate Puritan prejudice against all things Catholic, especially Catholic priests, which, instead of decreasing in the previous few years, had been hardened into a kind of contempt.

The author of Father Matignon's obituary, himself a Protestant, summed up the situation which the new pastor had to meet in this city:

His predecessors wanted either talents, character or perseverance, and nothing of consequence had been done towards

<sup>18</sup> Dilhet-Browne, *Etat de l'Eglise* (Washington, 1922), p. 90.



gathering and directing a flock. The good people of New England were something more than suspicious on the subject of his success: they were suspicious of the Catholic Doctrines. Their ancestors, from the settlement of the country, had been preaching against the Church of Rome; and their descendants, even the most enlightened, felt a strong impression of undefined and undefinable dislike, if not hatred, towards every papal relation. Absurd and foolish legends of the Pope and his religion were in common circulation, and the prejudice was too deeply rooted to be suddenly eradicated or even opposed. . . .

Dr. Matignon was exactly fitted to encounter all these difficulties. . . . With meekness and humility, he disarmed the proud; with prudence, learning, and wisdom, he met the capacious and slanderous, and so gentle and so just was his course, that even the censorious forgot to watch him and the malicious were too cunning to attack one armed so strong in honesty. For four years he sustained the weight of this charge alone. . . .<sup>19</sup>

A slight indication of one side of Boston's attitude to him in the beginning is found in an anti-Catholic communication, carried by the *Columbian Centinel* of October 3, 1792:

The cloud darkens apace, for among the late importations, are two [*sic*] celebrated Doctors of the Sorbonne, who meditate a new triumph to Anti-Christ, hence may we already measure the progress of proselytism to Popery and the alarming success of the Missionary's [Thayer's] labours. . . .

A statement was made some fifteen years after Father Matignon's arrival, that at one time "a zealous Doctor of Sorbonne was almost stoned to death [in Boston], because he tried to plant the Catholic religion in the city."<sup>20</sup> This is the only evidence known of such an incident — it did not happen at his arrival here, that is certain. Father Ciquart relates about himself that having to wait eight weeks in Boston for a passage to

<sup>19</sup> Obituary notice.

<sup>20</sup> *Father Nevinckx's Journal*, Sept. 16, 1807; cf. *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XIX (1902), 42.

the Ste. Croix, "he wore his soutane all that time, and received no insult or inconvenience."

During the month of September, there were then four priests residing in Boston.

Father Ciquart left Boston in early October, in accordance with the Bishop's plan for the Indian missions in Maine. Shortly thereafter Father Thayer also departed. He went South to try out the mission field of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia. This was likewise in accord with the Bishop's plan; he had offered that section to Father Thayer as a parish if he should like it. Although Father Thayer had been reluctant even as late as April to give up his place in Boston, he immediately accepted the Bishop's proposal on Father Matignon's arrival. As he himself expressed his mind to Bishop Carroll, "My extreme love for the Boston congregation made me desirous of retaining so valuable a man as the Doctor, and made me look out for another place for myself, knowing that both of us could not live there."<sup>21</sup>

Nor were these mere empty words. Before leaving, Father Thayer drew up his will, by which he made over to Father Matignon all his property, not only what he possessed officially as pastor, but what he owned personally as well.

I, John Thayer, priest, being in perfect health of body and in a sound mind, after committing my soul into the hands of my merciful Creator and Redeemer, do make and publish this my last will and testament — that is, I give and bequeath all the property which I possess, real, personal and mixed, without any exception whatever, to my good and worthy friend, Doctor Matignon, catholic priest, at present resident in this town of Boston, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever, and I constitute the same Dr. Matignon my *sole* executor — But, if, at my death, the said Dr. Matignon shou'd be deceas'd, I give and bequeath all my property as aforesaid to the Rev'd Francis Flemming, Catholic priest, in Philadelphia; and I constitute him my *sole* executor — But, if the Rev'd Francis Flemming shou'd decease before me, I give and

<sup>21</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 18, 1794 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B 11).

bequeath all my property as aforesaid to the Right Rev'd John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore; and I constitute him my *sole* executor — In testimony whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal, this fourth Day of October, one Thousand seven hundred and ninety two, —

John Thayer —

Signed, seal'd, published and declared, by the above named John Thayer, to be his last will and testament, in presence of us, who have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses, in the presence of the testator,

Braddock Loring

Ann Doyle

Mary Lobb <sup>22</sup>

### III

Thus, Father Matignon was left to face the problems centring around Father Rousselet's presence in the city. The latter had returned from the Maine Indians by early September. He would have no reason to go back to them, now that Father Ciquart was assigned to that mission. In Boston, he was to all intents and purposes the leader of the French schism. By this date he had given up any claim to the title of pastor; but despite the realization of his own irregular situation, he styled himself, "Catholic Missionary and Chaplain of the French families in Boston and vicinity." Indeed, he actually performed at least one marriage of a French couple in Roxbury on September 12th. On this occasion "the French ladies and gentlemen made a collection of above two hundred dollars, which were presented to the worthy and persecuted clergyman who performed the ceremony and who . . . has merited by his conduct the patronage he enjoys." <sup>23</sup>

The group which he served were ardent Royalists. On Octo-

<sup>22</sup> Offered for probate, Nov. 20, 1815.

<sup>23</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Sept. 12, 1792. The parties married were J. J. Madey, of Martinique, and Madame de Cornet (Prudence Plimpton). On the previous Feb. 25th, Father Rousselet had baptized four children of Madame Cornet's sister, Ursula Plimpton Bertody, at Dedham (*Holy Cross Church Register, Boston Dioc. Arch.*). The Bertody family had come from Guadeloupe.

ber 1st, Father Rousselet, together with twenty-three other French persons resident in Boston and the adjacent towns, signed a declaration of protest against the French Revolutionary Government in France.<sup>24</sup>

It was undoubtedly this same group of patriotic Frenchmen who initiated the publication of a second French newspaper in Boston. Proposals for it were sent out in November; Father Rousselet was to be the editor, and had obtained some American assistance to translate the French articles into English.

On December 11th, a satirical communication on this venture appeared in *The Argus*. It was headed, "The French Revolution Defeated," and began thus:

Twenty-four Frenchmen, in and near the town of Boston, have entered a protest, in the office of a Notary Public in Boston, against the French Revolution. Upon finding this to be the case, the King of Prussia and the Duke of Brunswick have returned to Vienna: There was nothing left for them to . . . But as these *Protesters* have a Gazette of their own, under the *Priest*, which will be out within a day or two, we will refer the readers to that for the wonderful effects of this new experiment in War and Politics. . . .

The first issue of the paper had actually appeared the previous day. No copy of this or of any other issue of it has been located. The *Columbian Centinel* of December 12, 1792, however, carried the statement, "A new paper commenced publishing in this town Monday last (December 10th) called the 'Political Courier of the World,' in French and English, in columns corresponding with each other. . . . The Editor is a man of talents."<sup>25</sup> The principal article in the paper, an "Account of the French Revolution," was translated for the editor by John Quincy Adams.<sup>26</sup>

In the meantime Father Matignon was employing his amiable tact and priestly zeal to the reuniting of this French group

<sup>24</sup> *Arch. Mar., Corr. Gen., Philadelphia*, vol. 2, fols. 393 ff.

<sup>25</sup> All the issues that could have been published were six: Dec. 10, 17, 24, 31, 1792, Jan. 7, 14, 1793.

<sup>26</sup> See Rev. Percival Merritt, *Boston Col. Soc. Pub.*, XXIV (1922), 296-299.



with the other Catholics. Before he came to Boston he had received instructions from Bishop Carroll to employ drastic measures, if necessary, in this matter. He was, indeed, expressly ordered to announce publicly to the people the kind of priest Father Rousselet was. When, however, gentle Father Matignon met Father Rousselet, he implored the latter not to make such a step necessary.<sup>27</sup> He hoped to bring the recalcitrant ecclesiastic to a proper settlement of the situation without undue publicity.

In this matter his own personal history as well as his saintly character undoubtedly played an important part, for his very presence in Boston was a living reminder to these patriotic French Catholics that he, like them, was opposed to the excesses of the new revolutionary régime in France. On this score they had every reason to unite with him. Furthermore, one of their great reasons for continuing in schism had ceased with the departure of Father Thayer. In consequence of all this, there was a well-founded basis for his charitable reluctance to employ drastic haste. By the middle of December at the latest, he was able to report to the Bishop that Father Rousselet was willing to write or was actually writing to the Bishop about regularizing his status.

The Bishop's reply, dated December 29, 1792, left no doubt of the kind of settlement demanded. "My letter to Mr. Rousselet [he wrote] will be of this purport: he has exercised faculties after their revocation: this is a denial of my jurisdiction. Till he retracts this disobedience, I cannot treat with him."<sup>28</sup>

What else the Bishop wrote to Father Rousselet is not known. However, as his letter must have reached Boston in the middle of January, 1793, there was probably some connection between it and Father Rousselet's decision to leave the city. This the priest made known by an announcement in *The Centinel* of January 19, 1793, to the effect that the publication of his newspaper would cease, as he was being called to the island of Guad-

<sup>27</sup> Msgr. Joseph-Octave Plessis, *Journal des visites pastorales de 1815 et 1816*, ed. by Msgr. Henri Tétu (Quebec 1903), p. 149. Plessis' source for his Boston history was Father Matignon himself.

<sup>28</sup> Draft, in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A 1 2.

eloupe at the request of a great number of its inhabitants in order to fulfill the duties of an apostolic missionary. Father Rousselet then left Boston.<sup>29</sup>

As for the French congregation itself, the idea of reunion came to be so acceptable to it that at Christmas time Father Matignon could write a formal letter on the point to Masson, previously the French warden of the church. It was worded as an invitation, sent in his own name and that of the Catholic congregation, "to the Catholics in Boston and vicinity who do not, since a great while assist at divine service," to unite themselves with the others, as true Catholics, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Bishop of Baltimore and of the priest chosen by him as pastor.

Masson, having communicated that letter to the French, reported in turn that "they with pleasure surrender themselves," and on January 1, 1793, he returned a formal reply to Father Matignon, setting forth the conditions "on which they will effectuate that reunion and reconciliation."

They were unanimous in acknowledging the Bishop's authority. Having accepted this first condition, they set down other conditions, as follows:

2. The wardens shall be chosen by the congregation every year the first Sunday after Easter, one a Frenchman the other an Irishman.

3. The two wardens shall have the sole direction of the temporal business of the church, and the priest or priests shall not interfere in any manner whatsoever.

4. A meeting of the congregation shall be held the first Sunday after reunion to determine the quality of voters for choice of wardens or other church matters, also to determine whether pews shall be built and the manner of disposing of them.

5. A committee of the congregation is to be chosen at the said meeting in order to revise the later regulations of the Church, so that they may be approved by the Bishop.

<sup>29</sup> It will be recalled that several of his supporters came from Guadeloupe. See below for the rest of Father Rousselet's life-story.

6. Messrs. Masson and Campbell will resume the function of wardens, till a new choice takes place.

7. The Bishop shall be requested to cause the lease of the Church to be signed over to the wardens . . . and the Congregation obliges itself to pay the rent as it will become due.

8. All contributions made in or for the church shall be received by the wardens, who will account to the Congregation.

9. The Congregation shall affix a salary to the priest from time to time according to their facilities and in the most convenient manner.

10. The priest shall be entitled to all perquisites arising from the functions, over and above his salary, and to one half the candles given at funerals.<sup>30</sup>

By February 18th, the French were able to get together a large enough group of signers to send this statement with a letter to the Bishop.

Almost immediately thereafter the names of Mamé Masson, Jean Jutau, Jean Piémont, and Robert Guédron, former supporters of Father Rousselet, and in a short while afterwards those of Dumaine, Dufort, and Gallet appear again on the church records.

Even though the schism was not completely settled, Father Matignon was heartened by this first great fruit of his labors; and after the New Year's day of 1793 he could set about repairing and brightening the church edifice.

At his first coming he had had the altar tables, the canopy, the pulpit curtain, etc., replaced: but now he had the whole interior of the church cleaned. Likewise the three upper windows fronting the street were put in order and fitted with new glass. Other improvements were also taken in hand. The efficient pastor's accounts show bills paid for "repairing, white-washing, etc., the inside of the church," and for lime, plaster, sand, brick, haulage, and labor for work performed on the outside of the church.

Everything possible was done to put the property in good order. Not even the churchyard was forgotten. The gateposts

<sup>30</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A I 2.

were reset, the gate was rehung, the paved walk mended: even the lawn was resown. And, perhaps most significant of all, the books show payments "for old debts contracted in 1789."

To obtain money for all these improvements and also for the pews, which were contemplated, two collections were taken up. The New Year collection had as contributors Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Messrs. Duggan, Connor, Foley, Burns, English, Daily, Lindar, and Aubrey, and Mrs. Welch, Lobb, Ivers, Doyle, and Baily. Father Ciquart, the companion of Father Matignon, now with the Maine Indians, donated out of his own personal fortune the sum of three pounds. The list of contributors and the total amount of their subscriptions — six pounds, sixteen shillings, and six pence — furnish some meagre notion of the smallness of the little Irish flock before the reunion and of their poverty as well. The second collection taken up at Easter showed just double that amount. The total of both collections, however, fell far short of the sum necessary to pay for the improvements.

Indeed, these improvements could be made only because of the generosity of certain Protestants, to whom Father Matignon's work had already made an appeal. Their action at this particular time indicated much more than their personal charity: it was a definite taking sides with the French Catholic Church and against popular opinion. The French Revolution had, from its outbreak, been greeted in Boston, as in the rest of the country, with almost universal enthusiasm. It was believed to be inspired by the same love of liberty which characterized our own. In addition the Revolution's opposition to the Catholic Church was at least a partial reason for the ardent sympathies of the Bostonians, which increased as the Revolution moved forward. These came to a climax with the tidings of the Revolutionary Army's victory over the Austrians (November 6, 1792). A civic celebration took place here in January 24, 1793, which rivaled that held in Paris itself.<sup>31</sup>

But in the very face of this pro-Revolution anti-Catholic sentiment some sane and conservative Boston leaders took the op-

<sup>31</sup> *Memorial Hist. of Boston*, IV, 11; see also *ibid.*, III, 203.



posite side. Prominent among them was Thomas Russell, Sr., who was at this moment perhaps the principal merchant in New England. In the month of February, 1793, he made a gift of fifty dollars to the Catholic church of the city, although it was composed in large part of French Royalists and presided over by a French refugee priest.

Not long afterwards (in April), and probably on Mr. Russell's initiative, a subscription was taken up among some non-Catholic gentlemen in Boston to aid in the church repairs. Father Matignon's memorandum of this collection is still extant and records in order the still well-known Boston names of "[Dr.?] Jeffrey [*sic*], Jos. Russell jun'r, Joseph Coolidge, Sam Parkman, Theodore Lyman, Leonard Jarvis, Thomas English, James Sullivan, Jos. Russell, Chas. Bulfinch, junior, John Lucas, Sam Elliott, Jonathon Harriss, Mrs. Baudoin, Dr. Joy, Thomas Perkins, E. Tuckerman, and Benjamin Russell." Their donations, amounting to two hundred and seventy-eight dollars, were not only of material help to the church, but were also one of the first manifestations of a spirit which characterized the Federalists from their origin. They gave powerful impetus, both morally and financially, to the new start which the Catholic congregation here was successfully making.

The extra money enabled Father Matignon to finance and to continue his improvements in the church. The altar picture with a new gilt frame was hung; two more windows had their boards removed and were fitted with glass and shutters; a place for singers was provided in the gallery; and the old original altar fittings, which had been dispersed at the beginning of the schism, were restored.<sup>32</sup>

Towards the end of Lent, the leaders of the French group received Bishop Carroll's formal reply to their proposals. It was dated, Baltimore, March 10th, and addressed to Messrs. Masson, Jutau, and Magner.

<sup>32</sup> The prudent pastor refused to receive some of these, lest the congregation become liable for the debt contracted for the whole of the articles originally sent on the credit of the Archbishop of Paris. This particular point was settled in June, 1794, according to the directions of Bishop Carroll (see *Book of Accounts*, p. 50).

Gentlemen,

Your favour of Feb. 18 gives me an assurance of your desire to reunite with your brethren and retrieve that credit to the professors of our Religion which has been impaired I fear by the events of the past years. I flattered myself that the presence, the amiable manners and virtues of Mr. Matignon would operate favorably on the minds of all and your present application leads me to believe that I was not deceived. I have considered attentively your conditions of reunion and shall remark on them with the freedom belonging to my office.

The 2nd condition which requires for wardens one Frenchman and one Irishman, if meant as a temporary regulation has my concurrence: if as a permanent one, it is improper 1st because it tends to perpetuate a source of disunion, 2nd because it excludes Catholics of other countries, who may be a part of the congregation and entitled to equal rights, as American, English, Spanish etc. I think therefore that after a perfect union is cemented, this article should be abolished and the wardens chosen amongst the fittest members, without regard to country. Perhaps a greater number of wardens would be useful.

The 3rd condition does not meet my entire approbation. I think that it would be an advantage to have the Pastor of the church associated with the wardens in the management of the temporalities. In most cases within my knowledge I have found the business much better conducted and with more harmony where this rule is observed. However this must not be an obstacle to an agreement if it can be effected otherwise.

You insist on the 7th condition, but I think, without one prospect of real advantage, which may not be obtained otherwise. (Proposes Father Thayer's making a legal declaration binding himself to respect certain rights in the congregation, — proposes a new lease to a body corporate, crossed out.)

To avoid the first inconvenience feared by you, I propose that Mr. Perkins who kindly promises to comply with the general desire shall cause a new lease to be either to the wardens or to the Rev. Mr. Matignon jointly with Mr. Thayer. Thus will be avoided the danger of falling of the lease by the death of a single person. . . .

Your 9th condition is very likely to be abused, by which the

Congn is to affix the salary of the pastor from time to time, under which a power may be pretended to compel the resignation of a pastor of exemplary zeal and conduct, but obnoxious to over-bearing characters in the Congn, by reducing his salary so low as not to leave him a subsistence. I have no objection to this article, provided that it be not left in the power of the Congn to lower the salary once agreed on, without the consent of the pastor himself.

My earnest request is that you will consider this letter with impartiality, coolness and moderation. I thank you sincerely for the steps you have taken already towards a reunion, and I hope you will not stop short in so good a work, merely for a punctilia, when all the substantial advantages contemplated by you will be fully obtained by accepting my propositions.<sup>33</sup>

Easter Day, 1793 (which that year fell on March 31st), must have been a very happy occasion for the Catholics of Boston. Their financial burdens lightened, popular prejudices softened, old differences forgotten, both French and Irish were united at that solemn service, in their redecorated church, and there, around their saintly pastor, they celebrated with a doubly real significance the feast of the Resurrection.

#### IV

Some supplementary details of the reunion remained to be arranged at a later date. On the whole, however, it was a united Catholic community, which Father Thayer found when in the early summer he returned to Boston from the Southern missions.

He was still the same zealous, perhaps over-zealous convert, for whom nothing, even the Church itself, moved forward fast enough. When writing to Rome at this time, the Bishop characterized Father Thayer as a priest "unfailing in obedience to his Bishop, zealous for the good of religion, and a strenuous opponent of the calumnious attacks made upon it by heretics."

<sup>33</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A 1 2.

The Bishop, however, added to this the revealing comment: "Would that he were less self-confident and more willing to be guided by the advice of others; and more eager to become all things to all men; in fine that he were more gentle in dealing not only with the heterodox but also with the flock entrusted to his care." <sup>34</sup>

Undoubtedly the Bishop had personally advised Father Thayer himself along the same lines. Nevertheless, the over-earnest missionary, on his return to Boston, could not resist the temptation to take up the pen once more in defense of the Church. He had been engaged, perhaps during his winter evenings in the South, in reading the second edition of Rev. Jeremy Belknap's *History of New Hampshire*, and the same author's *Discourse on the Discovery of America* (Boston, 1792). Shortly after his return to Boston, he sent a personal letter to the author, taking exception to the latter's hostility against the Catholic Church and presuming "to hope, that in a future edition, and in the other writings which you propose to publish, you will avoid the same errors."

Father Thayer took Mr. Belknap to task particularly for his "putting among the Catholic tenets that 'to break faith with heretics is no sin.'" <sup>35</sup> He expressly denied the truth of this allegation, and categorically asserted that "not only the ancient, but all the modern writers of our communion have positively declared this abominable position to be no article of their creed." Father Thayer also directly assailed Mr. Belknap's use of the terms *superstition* and *idolatry*, in reference to the Catholic missionaries' teaching of the Indians. <sup>36</sup>

Mr. Belknap made no other reply to Father Thayer than a formal note, which read, "Mr. B. presents his compliments to the Rev. Mr. Thayer and acknowledges the receipt of a letter from him, which he put into his file entitled 'Consideranda.'" <sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Bishop Carroll to Cardinal Antonelli, June 17, 1793 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A I 2).

<sup>35</sup> Belknap, *History*, I, 268, and II, 46.

<sup>36</sup> July 26, 1793, *Controversial Writings* (Boston, 1793), pp. 154-161.

<sup>37</sup> July 27, 1793, *Belknap Papers*, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 101 B 106.



Not long afterwards, Father Thayer took occasion to reply to the Dudleian Lecture on Popery, given at Harvard by the Rev. Dr. Lathrop, successor of the Mathers and minister of the Second Church. The lecturer had quite evidently attempted a remarkable softening of the traditional asperity and intolerance that had marked this performance. For example, he made explicit mention of his high esteem for the learning and piety of some of "our Catholic brethren." He thus undoubtedly reflected the reputation which Father Matignon was already acquiring in the city. Nor did he fail to assure "every mark of attention and friendship" to those Catholics who, in their difficulty and danger in France, should seek protection "in protestant countries," particularly America.

He even went to the unwonted length of expressing a hope that Catholics would not take offense at his statements. He also acknowledged that "the usurpations of the Romish church are by no means so threatening to the liberties and the happiness of mankind, as they were at the time when our fathers separated from her. In the last ages, reason and philosophy have gloriously triumphed over ignorance and enthusiasm. . . ." <sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, as was to be expected, mention was not omitted of the doctrine "which obliges all who embrace it to acknowledge subjection to a foreign power"; and Catholics were warned that they would be protected here "only while they confine their peculiarities to people of their own persuasion." Father Thayer was picked out for special attention. Although unnamed in the lecture, he was easily recognized by the initiated.

Doubtless for this reason, the Catholic missionary, who was engaged at the moment in preparing an edition of his *Controversial Writings*, inserted in it a reply to Dr. Lathrop's lecture. In this he insisted that the charges against Catholics still made in the lecture were groundless, and remarked on the apparent complacency taken by the lecturer in the supposed decline of the Catholic Church. The most striking part of Father Thayer's reply was a bold and direct challenge to the whole Dud-

<sup>38</sup> John Lathrop, D.D., *A Discourse on the Errors of Popery*, Sept. 4, 1793, pp. 7, 29, 30 (*Harvard Library*).

leian trust, itself prophetic of a later result in the already decreasing intolerance in Boston:

Had . . . charity been your guide, Sir, . . . instead of accepting the office, to which you were invited by the University, of blackening your fellow Christians, you would have solicited your brethren to join their efforts to yours to abolish altogether a foundation, whose object is to nourish animosity among American citizens. The Pope no longer appears at the head of your Primer, to affright your children; his effigy is no longer burnt on the fifth of November; no longer likewise should be held up as a bugbear to terrify our collegians.<sup>39</sup>

Father Thayer himself left Boston shortly afterwards (November 3rd), to return to his missions in the South. Neither Dr. Lathrop nor Dr. Belknap made any public reply to his censures on their writings. The latter's characteristic reaction was

not to write a word against him or anything that he has said. If the Roman Catholics are mending their principles and practice, I wish them success [he wrote]. The time may come when the Church of Rome may be as pure as it was in the Apostle's day. I am glad to find they are ashamed to own something which in the days of their insolence, they boasted in.<sup>40</sup>

In this controversy Father Matignon had taken no part. Instead, the former professor of the University of Paris used the opportunity of Father Thayer's presence in the city to make a missionary trip in October as far as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, both to serve and to get acquainted with the Catholics of the northern section.

Although the controversial writings have attracted most attention, there is reason to believe that Father Thayer had devoted himself that summer in Boston chiefly to preparations for founding a Catholic school here. Just before his coming to Boston in May, 1793, he had expressed to Bishop Carroll a desire to introduce into America some French and English sisterhoods, "religious women, skilled in both English and French,

<sup>39</sup> *Controversial Writings* (Boston, 1793), pp. 161-166.

<sup>40</sup> 5 *Colls. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, III, 344-345.

and outstanding examples of holy life . . . to supervise the education of young women." He had in mind particularly the nuns of the Ursuline or Visitation Orders. With this project the Bishop was in hearty agreement, and gave Father Thayer explicit permission to carry it out, only noting that the nuns who came must have the authoritative permission of their own superiors and that proper support for them in this country must be guaranteed.<sup>41</sup>

In accordance with this, Father Thayer, when he came to Boston, investigated the possibilities here and finally purchased a piece of property fronting northerly on Prince Street, and easterly on Margaret's Lane, in the north part of the city. It consisted of 2344 square feet of land, with a three-story wooden dwelling on it. Father Thayer paid six hundred pounds lawful money for it.<sup>42</sup> At the time of the purchase it was occupied by John Tilestone, schoolmaster, who indeed continued to rent it through the year 1798 and used it for school purposes throughout the whole period.

These facts and others, which will be noticed later, apparently indicate that Father Thayer's ultimate reason for this purchase was the establishment of the school, for which he had obtained Bishop Carroll's permission. And as Father Thayer knew that he himself would not be present in Boston to look after it, he assigned the property to Father Matignon in trust for what he called "a pious foundation."<sup>43</sup>

After the zealous missionary's departure, in the week of November 3rd, Father Matignon was again left alone. In preparation for Christmas of 1793, he made a final settlement of the debts of the congregation. "According to the directions of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, in consideration of several articles, which

<sup>41</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, May 9, 1793 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A I 2).

<sup>42</sup> In 1798 it was valued at \$2500.

<sup>43</sup> The warranty deed, which was signed on Oct. 12, 1793, runs, "Mark Richards to John Thayer, amt. 600 pounds lawful money." This is the same property, which was described in the *Book of Bounds and Valuations* for 1798. (*Report, Record Commission*, XXII [1890], 137.) In the *Boston Directories* for 1789 and 1796, John Tilestone is named "school-master, Prince St" (*Report, Record Commission*, X, 201, 281).

Messrs. Campbell and Masson had paid for and which they have returned to the church," the sum of seventy dollars was paid to each.

The money to pay these quitclaims <sup>44</sup> and finally to free the church from all its prior encumbrances was obtained from the sale of the twenty-eight pews. It is significant that the two wardens, one French, the other Irish, occupied the first two pews: also that, besides Masson's, hardly one French name appeared on this list; it is perhaps most significant that the name of John Wagner, probably the wealthiest Boston Catholic, was not included, unless, as is most probable, he was one of the anonymous persons who paid for pews eleven and fourteen.

Nevertheless, the baptism records show that Father Matignon had drawn back into the church a large part of Father Rousselet's supporters. Some came back as early as April, 1793. They were associated with the family of Louis Charles Cherot Dumaine, who gradually brought in their wake the families de Salimbène, Dufort, Gallet, and de la Bretesche. In fact, during the year 1793 the zealous pastor had performed twenty-two baptisms and twelve marriages; a sign that he had been in contact with some four or five hundred Catholics, both French and Irish, most of them living in Boston, but some in the neighboring towns.

During the little more than a year that he had been pastor, he had substantially healed the schism, completely paid off the church debt, and notably softened hostile prejudice. During that time the congregation, under his prudent guidance, had given promise of that internal unity, increasing devotion, and steady numerical increase which marked the next quarter-century of its history.

During the next year, 1794, Father Matignon almost doubled the number of his baptisms; he performed forty-two in fact. A certain number of these, however, represented what turned out to be a merely temporary addition to the congregation. In the month of August, a sizable group of Acadians (some two score in all) from the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon came to the

<sup>44</sup> Father Matignon's *Church Accounts, 1793-1797* (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*, I, 50).



city.<sup>45</sup> What caused this extraordinary group migration from the North is unknown. The Acadians disappeared in the early summer of 1795. But their visit recalls with interest the group of Boston Acadians who a generation before, under the leadership of the valiant Jacques Maurice Vigneaux, had left this province for the French islands rather than give up their religion here or go to Canada, where they would be under the British rule.<sup>46</sup>

Another group which increased the number of the 1794 baptisms was that centring around the French Consul, Jean Baptiste Daunery. The political views of the latter may be gathered from the fact that he named a son, born March 20, 1794, and baptized on April 3rd, Germain Thomas Samuel Adams Daunery. He himself was, nevertheless, a practicing Catholic, and during his short stay in the city he and his wife figured in several French marriage and baptism ceremonies. Likewise, during a short period the church records reveal the presence of Citoyen Aphrodite Châtelain, Citoyen Claude Thomas, Citoyen Jean Duballet, indicating that some at least of the Republican French retained the practice of their faith.

In the early part of 1795, certain baptismal records reveal the reunion with the church of the last supporters of Father Rousselet. Their return may well be related to the arrival in Boston in late 1794 of news of the tragic but edifying death of Father Rousselet in Guadeloupe. That former Boston pastor had gone through sufficiently quiet days in that island while it was under English control. In the early autumn of 1794, the French revolutionary party under the infamous Victor Hugues gained the upper hand and a veritable reign of terror followed. Its climax came on October 7th, with a horrible massacre of the Royalists. Estimates differ as to the number of those who were shot at once: between four hundred and nine hundred. What is certain is that some twenty-seven were saved to be

<sup>45</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXVII, 245. The Acadian group account for five baptisms in 1794, and six in 1795.

<sup>46</sup> The above evidence is gathered from the Baptismal and Mortuary Reports of the Holy Cross Church, Boston, in *Boston Dioc. Arch.* The earliest baptisms recorded for this group is Oct. 17, 1794, the latest May 3, 1795.

publicly guillotined, and that among them was Father Rousselet.<sup>47</sup>

Previous to his death, the priest called together the unhappy captives who were incarcerated with him . . . and recommended to them to implore the divine goodness for forgiveness with a firm reliance upon the infinite mercy of the Redeemer. He stated further to them that he was a suspended priest and deservedly so, yet in the critical circumstances in which they were placed . . . his faculties returned to him and he could be of service to them. He exhorted them therefore to repent truly of all their transgressions, to kneel down and receive absolution. . . .<sup>48</sup>

When the prisoners were summoned from the jail, (Father Rousselet) led the procession and began to chant the *Laudate Dominum*. The other prisoners took up the second verse and the sacred hymn did not cease to be heard, until the arrival of the prisoners in the hall of the tribunal. After their condemnation was pronounced, they resumed their chant, which they continued while the executioner worked the guillotine. There finally came a moment when the hymn was sung by only one voice: and then it was heard no more. The sacrifice was consummated.<sup>49</sup>

In April, 1795, not long after the news of Father Rousselet's martyrdom could have reached Boston, the very last group of Father Rousselet's French supporters finally yielded to the call of reunion.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> T. Coke, *History of the West Indies* (3 vols.: Liverpool, 1808-1811), II, 396, 400; B. Edwards, *History of the West Indies* (3 vols.: London, 1793), III, 470 ff.; Lacour, *Hist. de la Guadeloupe* (London, 1791), II, 333 ff., esp. 358; Boston *Independent Chronicle*, Dec. 1, 1794, writes, "more than 450 Royalists have fallen victims of the laws."

<sup>48</sup> Bishop Fenwick's *Memoirs to Serve for the Future Ecclesiastical History of the Diocese of Boston*, "given on the authority of M. de Bonneuil, a respectable planter of Guadeloupe." Bonneuil was an intimate friend of Bishop Cheverus. The story was known in 1815 to Bishop Plessis, who probably learned it from Father Matignon (*Visites Pastorales*, p. 150); B. U. Campbell's account in the *U.S. Catholic Magazine*, VIII (1849), 103, is somewhat dramatized.

<sup>49</sup> La Cour, *Hist. de la Guadeloupe*, II, 359.

<sup>50</sup> The Madey-Bertody-Plimpton group.

## V

Although Father Matignon's success in dealing with the French was spectacular, his ordinary work was chiefly among the Irish, who made up by far the larger part of *the growing* congregation. His first baptism when he arrived in Boston was performed for Catherine, the daughter of James and Mary O'Brien (August 27, 1792). His second was for John, the son of Marty Sullivan and his wife Elizabeth (Creigh) (September 2, 1792). In the succeeding months, the names of some forty Irish men heads of families are found in the church books. A few of these names had occurred in Father Thayer's time, but most of them were new.

Since 1785 a series of important works had been undertaken in Boston, which gave employment to the so-called laboring class. In March of that year, a company was chartered to build the Charles River Bridge (Charlestown): in 1792, the West Boston (or Cambridge) Bridge was built. In 1793, a company was formed to construct the Middlesex Canal, and operations on that epoch-making project started in 1794. Finally, in 1798 work on the new State House in Boston was undertaken.

The social and religious circumstances which the unmarried Irish Catholics found when they immigrated to this district had unfortunately, although inevitably, led to many mixed marriages. From the very beginning of Father Matignon's ministry there was a gradual but sure increase of the use of his services by such Irish Catholics. The records show baptisms of children, aged nine, aged seven, aged sixteen, aged ten, aged four and three and six: the records also show the baptism of some of the non-Catholic parents, but these are surprisingly few: there are no records containing conversions, but there are clear signs in the presence of godfathers and godmothers that a surprisingly large percentage of persons with non-Irish names had become Catholics.

It is almost impossible to believe that meanwhile Father Matignon, in his meticulous care for the little flock in Boston, neglected the children, especially the boys. Here was a former

seminary and university professor, whose whole life had been devoted to youth, more particularly to those preparing for the priesthood, and now consecrating his priesthood to the formation of a parish. The very necessity of his position compelled him to pick out some boys and train them as altar boys. The habits of former days could have easily thrown him into the routine of teaching these boys more than actual need required, and of carefully scrutinizing their possibilities as future priests.

There is other evidence as well pointing in the same direction. Father Thayer's pious foundation for a Catholic school, which had been put in Father Matignon's care; a donation of three pounds given to somebody by the Irish Charitable Society in 1794, "to purchase school books for poor children of Irish extraction,"<sup>51</sup> and a letter to Father Cheverus, of which more later, indicate the probability that some effort toward teaching Catholic boys more than their answers at Mass was being made in the parish of Holy Cross very early in Father Matignon's pastorate.

There is a well-documented tradition that after Father Cheverus' arrival, Father Matignon sang in the choir during Father Cheverus' Mass. This fits in well with a desire expressed by Father Matignon himself in early 1795, that "a singing master [be] appointed to teach boys and others plain chant and singing"; as if he himself had been doing it previously.

What may be regarded as a second phase in Father Matignon's ministry here began at Easter, 1795. At the annual church meeting, which took place on the Sunday after, new arrangements were considered for the congregation. These were passed and publicly read in church on June 28th, and became its rules for many years.

Article 1. Every year on the first Sunday after Easter there shall be a general meeting of the congregation for the election or continuation in office of three church-Wardens, and for the regulating of every other matter that may concern the congregation.

Article 2. One of the said Wardens shall be appointed

<sup>51</sup> *Journal, Amer. Irish Hist. Soc.*, XXIV, 188.



treasurer and in consequence shall receive from the two others the money collected every Sunday. He shall keep in a book a regular account of the contributions paid by every pew-holder and immediately pay the same into the hands of the pastor of the congregation as usual, till such time as the congregation by its increase shall be enabled to fix a regular and competent salary for their pastor, which shall be paid to him weekly in the same manner.

Article 3. The other two Wardens will carry the box every Sunday and great holy day and in case of unavoidable absence, shall be supplied by the treasurer Warden, or the preceding year's Wardens.

Article 4. As it is impossible to know who has paid, unless the money be marked, every pewholder will mark his money with either his name, or the number of his pew. Otherwise no credit shall be given for it and it will be supposed unpaid.

Article 5. In case any one desires to hire a pew instead of purchasing it, or even a single seat, the Wardens may consent to it, provided no purchaser applies at the same time. But no pew shall be let for less than one year; and the year's rent shall be paid always before hand, independently of the weekly contribution.

Article 6. The amounts of the contribution for each pew shall be settled quarterly, that is, after the last Sunday of the months of March, June September and December of every year. And, if any money be due, a bill of it signed by the treasurer shall be carried to each person by the clerk, who will receive the money and give receipt for it.

Article 7. In case the said money due is not paid in three weeks time after said notification, it will be lawful to the Wardens to sell the pew to another person. And if it fetches more than what is due, they will return the surplus to the former owner.

Article 8. If two persons apply for the same pew, it will be given to the highest bidder.

Article 9. It is expected from the day of the publication of the present regulations, none of those who frequent the church will pretend to sit in any pew, which they have not bought or hired, except with the consent of the owner of the pew. But at the same time that regard will be paid to decent strangers,

or Catholics not settled in the town, which not only politeness and good manners but charity and mutual benevolence require.

Article 10. Twice every year, that is, about the first Sunday after Easter, and the first Sunday in October, a meeting shall be held for a collection towards the ordinary expences of the church, as lights for divine service, wine and bread for Mass, coals for the winter, the clerk's and other attendants' wages, the sweeping, cleaning and scouring the church, and the street below the gates, washing of the church linnen, spruce for Christmas and the fixing of it, spruce for palm Sunday and other like expences. The names of the subscribers with the amount of their respective subscription, together with the expenditure of it, shall be registered in the present book and liable to the inspection of the Wardens and Pastor.

Article 11. A clerk will be appointed at the choice of the pastor in being, whose office shall be to open and shut the church upon Sundays and holy days, to keep it clean, to attend in the vestry when required, to light fire in the winter, to check unruly persons in the gallery or below, to show unacquainted strangers proper seats, to carry the necessary messages for the use of the church, to attend at the christenings, marriages and burials &c. If the collections raised twice a year allow it, a weekly salary may be allowed to him, independently of what every member may give him as a compensation for his trouble.

Article 12. When possible, an organ will be procured and a singing master appointed to teach boys and others plain chant and singing and to preside in the singers' gallery. Meantime the church wardens will use their endeavours and influence to procure the fittest and most respectable singers and give them every encouragement in their power.

Article 13. The same will also maintain with utmost of their power the respect, good order and decency due to the house of God; and in case of anything contrary to it, will use all the means which zeal and prudence may suggest; and in such occurrences will be supported by the whole congregation. Every one is also particularly recommended never to bring or to suffer any dogs in the church.

Article 14. Every first Sunday of the month, the said Wardens shall meet after Vespers in the Vestry with the Pastor, to

consider and regulate what may be necessary, and to advise in common on whatever may concern the good of the church; and in matters of importance, may agree to call a meeting of the whole Congregation.

Article 15. Any amendment, addition or change in the preceding articles may be agreed upon, provided it be done in a full meeting of the whole congregation, called together and presided by the pastor in being, with and by the advise of the Wardens, and the said amendments, changes or additions be approved at two successive readings, after due notice given of them on the Sunday before.<sup>52</sup>

Just about this same time the church of Boston received an important addition in the person of Don Juan Stoughton, the Spanish Consul, a splendid Catholic, who had lived previously in New York.<sup>53</sup> Together with John Magner and Mr. Gallet, he was elected a warden that year.

Father Matignon's continuous care for the church is illustrated also in his desire that the divine services be celebrated as worthily as possible. Early in his pastorate he had provided a singers' pew in the gallery, and in article 12 of the regulations of June, 1795, he had shown his desire to procure an organ and a singing master.

On December, 1795, one dollar was paid for "carriage of instruments of music." That item suggests that there was instrumental music to accompany the Christmas services of that year; and tradition points out that a certain Mr. Mallet,<sup>54</sup> who appears in the *Boston Directory* of 1796 as a musician, was the first director.

During these years Father Matignon lived at the house of Mrs. Mary Lobb, in Leverett's or Quaker Lane (now Congress Street), in what was a small Catholic section.

<sup>52</sup> *Holy Cross Church Account Book*, I, 59 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). This notice, entirely drawn up in Father Matignon's writing, may be considered a sample of his ability to handle the English language at the time. The spelling of the proper names in the church registers, however, shows that he did not speak English as well as he wrote it (Dowayer, Dowley, Ephernan).

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Rev. Wm. O'Brien to John Stoughton, July 6, 1795 (*New York Public Library*).

<sup>54</sup> Francis Mallet taught singing in Mr. Dufort's school in Boston in 1795.

Father Matignon was also living in a political atmosphere in which party feeling ran high. There was a growing division here between the Federalist Republican and the Democratic parties, one factor in which was the attitude taken by each toward the French Revolution. Popular sentiment in New England was strongly sympathetic with the French, not only out of a belief in their kindred ideals and a sense of gratitude to the French, but also out of hatred for the British Government, which then stood opposed to the Revolution, and also out of bigotry against the Catholic Church, which had been in union with the French Monarchy and was being persecuted by the Revolutionaries.

One of the books advertised for sale in the *Independent Chronicle* of January 5, 1795, was entitled "Signs of the Times: or the overthrow of the Papal Tyranny in France. The Prelude of Destruction to Popery and Despotism, but of Peace to Mankind," by J. Bicheno.<sup>55</sup> At another date, the same newspaper contained the item: "on Tuesday last April 7, was celebrated in this town the late glorious successes of France and the restoration of the liberties of our allies the citizens of Holland."<sup>56</sup> As on a public holiday there was ringing of bells, discharge of cannons, display of French and American flags, sound of martial music, and of course a banquet at Faneuil Hall.

The Protestant ministers, entering freely as was their wont into the discussion of the great public events, generally favored the popular side. By way of exception, some few ministers, notably the Rev. David Osgood, pastor of the (Congregational) church in Medford, took a stand against the French Revolution's "excesses and cruelties, which chill all humane minds with horror."

"We all rejoiced at the downfall of despotism in [France]," he declared in a Thanksgiving sermon in 1794; "we considered it as the dawn of liberty to the world. But how soon was the fair morning overcast. They had no sooner adopted a popular government than all the violence of faction broke out. . . . From that time to this, their civil government has been nothing but

<sup>55</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, Jan. 5, 1795.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, April 9, 1795.



a contest of parties, carried on with all the ferocity of barbarism." His whole sermon was pro-Federalist in tone and anti-revolutionary.<sup>57</sup>

His sermon's appearance in print was greeted with wrathful opposition by the new Democratic party. Its author, together with a few other clergymen of like sentiments, was accused of having "enlisted in the service of the Monarchists," and of attempting to weaken those Republican principles which have been "the barrier against the introduction of the Episcopal Hierarchy into this country." It was said that such clergymen were marked exceptions to the "many gentlemen of the clergy [who] have done themselves honor by publicly advocating the cause of France."<sup>58</sup>

The most bitter and outspoken expression of hostility toward such ministers was that given anonymously by James Sullivan. He entitled his anti-British and anti-Catholic diatribe *The Altar of Baal Thrown Down, or The French Nation Defended against the Public Slander of David Osgood — par Citoyen de Novion*. Assuming the character of a French republican, he asserted among other charges that

(14) When the late king ascended the throne, the people were sunk to the abyss of poverty and the priests' were employed to keep them down, that they might not assail the throne under which they had been so long crushed.

(24) Our ferocious zeal gives you pain perhaps on the score of religion. You used to pray for the downfall of the Whore of Babylon. We have pulled her down, and you scandalize us for the deed. You grieve that some of us have forsaken the Christian religion. We never had it, unless you agree that the Romish church holds it. We allow all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences; do not your constitutions do the same?

Your ingenuity would do honor to one of the order of the Jesuits, which have long been expelled from France.

The golden age which you admire in France was the time

<sup>57</sup> "The Wonderful Works of God," a sermon delivered on the annual Thanksgiving, Nov. 20, 1794 (Boston, 1794). A copy is in the Mass. Hist. Soc. Library.

<sup>58</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, Jan. 5, 1795.

when the religion of Baal flourished — when his altars stood strong, surrounded with the priests who were in love with Monarchies and who delighted in the miseries of mankind.<sup>59</sup>

The Federalist side was again explained in its turn by the Rev. Dr. David Tappan, in the printed copy of his Thanksgiving sermon, delivered at Charlestown, February 19, 1795. He made the point that for “the kindness and generosity of the French nation to us in the time of our distress,” we were indebted to the existing government, of that time, “to the King, Nobles and Dignified Clergy of France. . . . To whom then are we to express our gratitude? To our real benefactors or to their mortal Enemies?”<sup>60</sup>

The Democratic attack continued into July, revealing with increasing bitterness the growing success of the Federalists.<sup>61</sup> The difference in party spirit and in attitude to Catholics was manifested likewise in the debates on the naturalization bill. The *Independent Chronicle* wrote on January 5, 1795: “A naturalization bill is now, and has been for some time before Congress. It contemplates increasing the impediments to Citizenship. This is right.” Then it declared that this country did not desire aristocrats driven from their European homes.<sup>62</sup>

In the course of debate on this bill, in the Federal House of Representatives on Thursday, January 1, 1795:

Mr. Samuel Dexter [of Charlestown] entered at some length into the ridicule of certain tenets of the Roman Catholic religion [he] thought that priestcraft had done more mischief than aristocracy. . . .

Mr. Madison did not approve the ridicule attempted to be thrown out on the Roman Catholics. In their religion there was nothing inconsistent with the purest republicanism. In Switzerland about one half of the Cantons were of the Roman Catholic persuasion. Some of the most democratical ones were so; Cantons where every man gave his vote for representative. . . .<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Issued Jan. 12, 1795 (copy in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Library*).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 37. <sup>61</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, July 20, 1795.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1795. <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1795.

Into none of this controversy did Father Matignon enter by even a single word, as far as is known. On the other hand, in August, 1795, when he had resided three years in this country, he expressed his desire of becoming a citizen of the United States, and presented a petition for naturalization to the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. In preparation for this he had obtained the endorsement of five non-Catholic ministers of the city. On August 17th, the Rev. Messrs. Samuel West, of the Hollis Street Church, John Clarke, of the First Church, Samuel Parker, of Trinity Church, Peter Thacher, of the church in Brattle Street, and William Walter, of Christ Church,<sup>64</sup> signed a document certifying that

we are acquainted with the Rev. Doctor Francis Anthony Matignon, that we know of his having resided in Boston for more than two years last past; that during the said term of two years he has behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same; and that in our opinion, he will be a good citizen of the United States.

They thereby gave an undeniably great proof of tolerant sentiment and of Father Matignon's own reputation among them.

Father Matignon appeared before the court personally on August 31st. In his petition he set forth among other requirements

that he doth absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty whatever, and particularly the government and Republic of France, of which he is a native; . . . and that he further declares that he has not borne any hereditary title nor been of any of the orders of Nobility in the same State from which he came.

Whereupon the Court, upon due inquiry made, having found that the facts alleged in the petition were true, admitted him

<sup>64</sup> The Rev. John Thayer, who was in Boston at the time, also signed.

to become a citizen of the United States and the oaths by law prescribed were administered to him in open court.<sup>65</sup>

It is a matter of some interest and importance that the oath which Father Matignon was required to take, and which he did take, contained the words:

I . . . do truly and sincerely . . . declare . . . that no foreign prince, person, *prelate*, state or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, superiority, preeminence, authority, *dispensing* or other power, in any matter, civil, *ecclesiastical or spiritual*, within this commonwealth, . . . and I make this . . . declaration . . . heartily and truly, according to the common meaning and acceptance of the foregoing words, without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever.<sup>66</sup>

When Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Carroll on June 24, 1796, he was able to say:

Our little congregation continues to be peaceful, and fervently pray God for your long preservation. Undoubtedly it would grow faster and be even more edifying, if it had a better pastor.

The progress made in four years under Father Matignon's direction is strikingly set forth in the summer of 1796. On June 19, 1796, the subscription list for ordinary church expenses is the largest of any found up to then. The total sum of this collection was \$88.72.<sup>67</sup> Some sixty families were represented, almost exclusively Irish. The ordinary donation was one dollar; indeed, the highest gifts were ten dollars, of which there were but two; and there was one of four dollars, two of three dollars, and six of two dollars.

The members of the congregation were not rich: but they were united and peaceable, and interested in the upkeep of

<sup>65</sup> *Archives of Mass. Supreme Judicial Court*, no. 107,033.

<sup>66</sup> *Constitution of Mass.* (1780), chap. VI. See also the form of oath taken by John Bond, on Jan. 4, 1794 (*Mass. Arch.*, vol. 295).

<sup>67</sup> This is the first collection list given only in dollars and cents (*Church Records Account Book*, p. 62). Subscriptions probably promised in June, but received only in August, came from Messrs. Foley, Cavanagh, Kavanagh and Cottrill, Smithwick, G. Connor. These brought the total to \$105.28.



their church building, for which the proceeds of the collection were used.

In July, 1796, Father Matignon had the church repaired. He had Mr. Loring make a new double-blind gate before the entry of the church, and Mr. Gammel, the carpenter, and his son, do two weeks' work on window "joys," post, hinges, window-frames, and mending the pulpit and the pews in the gallery. Besides that, several windows had new glass put in them. The inside of the church was whitewashed; and by August 6th Mr. Aubry, the painter, began his share of the work. He did all the shutters and the new gate, as well as the fence which Mr. Maloney, the sexton, made, and then the whole of the woodwork inside the church with three coats and four in some places. In all of this work, over one hundred dollars was spent. Father Matignon reported his progress in a letter to Bishop Carroll.

## VI

The rest of this letter of June 24, 1796, was taken up with Father Thayer. At the time it was written that restless ecclesiastic was in New York City, seeking to become assistant to the Rev. William O'Brien, who was pastor there. He had not been satisfied in the parish of Alexandria, Virginia, and its environs, which the Bishop gave him after he left Boston in November, 1793. He had accepted that post only because it was the best then vacant. He did not like the climate or the customs of the South: he was, for example, entirely out of sympathy with the institution of slavery, and made some complaints to Bishop Carroll on that matter. Although the Bishop answered him wisely and paternally, Father Thayer finally insisted on leaving Alexandria. He pressed for an appointment in the North, especially in Philadelphia or New York. With characteristic egotism he even asserted that his not being appointed to either of these places amounted to an unjustified persecution on the part of the priests already there. In this mind he made formal application to the Bishop for permission to leave the United

States,<sup>68</sup> requesting at the same time permission to work in some place in New England until he could leave the country.

On August 12, 1794, Bishop Carroll wrote to Father Thayer, reluctantly granting the latter's request for permission to go into another diocese; but he added, "as to commissioning you to solicit alms or send in nuns and priests, I shall beg to be excused."<sup>69</sup> However, Father Thayer did not act on the permission at that time: he remained in the South the next winter also, and again requested his exeat.<sup>70</sup>

Bishop Carroll recognized Father Thayer's talents and zeal. He knew that the convert priest had already disposed of the greatest part of his property for a pious foundation,<sup>71</sup> and desirous as he was to retain as many priests as possible in the States, he gave Father Thayer his word to try to get him placed in New York, and in the meantime to allow him to work in New England, as Father Thayer requested. The Bishop, however, attached certain conditions to this assurance: first, that the New York appointment depended on Father O'Brien's willingness to receive him; secondly, that the New England permission should not include Boston or its immediate vicinity, and that it should be exercised only with Father Matignon's agreement.

Perhaps it was on this occasion that Father Matignon received from Bishop Carroll the powers of Vicar-General for New England, which it is known that he had before the arrival of Father Cheverus.<sup>72</sup>

In any case, Father Thayer came to Boston from Alexandria in the summer of 1795. He was in this town during the month

<sup>68</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 18, 1794, March 29, 1798, April 10, 1795; Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, Jan. 13, 1794, July 15, 1795, Aug. 12, 1794, April 4, 1795 (all in the *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>69</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 9 A I 2.

<sup>70</sup> There is one indication that Father Thayer's letter, which was dated the 1st of August, was written from Boston. It contained enclosed a letter from Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll. It may have been written *after* a visit to Boston.

<sup>71</sup> Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, April 10, 1795.

<sup>72</sup> When Father Cheverus arrived, Father Matignon asked Bishop Carroll to give Father Cheverus faculties himself, "being reluctant to let Father Cheverus know the powers which you have honored me with, and which I do not deserve" (Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 24, 1797).

of August, and was one of the endorsers of Father Matignon's petition for naturalization. Where he lived during the succeeding autumn and winter is unknown: but it is certain that he gave up for the time being his plan to leave the United States. This change of mind was due, doubtless, not only to the Bishop's kindly indulgence, but likewise to Father Matignon's gentle insistence.<sup>73</sup>

Given the Bishop's permission to exercise his faculties somewhere in New England for the time being, Father Thayer may be supposed to have done so. Some evidence indicates that he worked in Rhode Island and Connecticut, for exactly during the latter part of the few months when his movements cannot be traced with certainty, an otherwise unidentified priest is known to have been a resident in western Connecticut.

In the month of January, 1796, this priest advertised in the *Connecticut Journal*:

The Roman Catholics of Connecticut, are inform'd that a Priest is now in New Haven, where he will reside for some time. . . . Those who wish to make use of his ministry, will find him by enquiring at Mr. Azel Kimberly's, Chapel-street. New Haven, January 28, 1796.

The Printers of this state are desired to insert this advertisement.

Les François sont avertis qu'il y a un Prêtre catholique en ville. . . . On le demandera chez Monsieur Kimberly: Rue de la Chapelle, New Haven.<sup>74</sup>

On March 1st and 8th the *Connecticut Courant* carried an advertisement:

For Sale. A house located in Windsor, opposite the new church, distant from there eighty yards, and the same from the river. The place is provided with a barn and a carriage house, and has a fine garden. There is every accommodation; the buildings are all new and entirely finished. It is only seven miles from Hartford, and situated in a very pleasant locality. For terms, apply to Richard L. Sell, living on the premises. February 20, 1796.

<sup>73</sup> See Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 24, 1796.

<sup>74</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, Jan. 28, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, 1796.

This advertisement was printed in both French and English, and possibly was connected with Father Thayer.

Furthermore, when Father Thayer went to New York, as it is known he did in early April, 1796, it was with the intention, not only to assist in that city, but also to "make missionary journeys into Rhode Island and Connecticut," <sup>75</sup> as if not to discontinue a work already begun in those States.

Among other indications pointing in the same direction is the fact that Father Thayer had preached in Connecticut already in 1793, before he went to Alexandria. On November 10th of that year he had occupied the pulpit of the First Congregational church of Norwich, Connecticut, at the invitation of its pastor, the Rev. Joseph Strong, and "essayed to establish the divine institution of the Catholic church and on the following Tuesday, November 12, he had delivered a discourse in the same place on the invocation of the saints and the efficacy of prayers to them." <sup>76</sup>

Although this chapter in Father Thayer's career is based only on circumstantial evidence, it has (in the present state of the documentation) sufficient probability to be used as a working hypothesis. It really amounts to an establishment of Father Thayer's being the first English-speaking missionary in Connecticut.<sup>77</sup>

Father Thayer's whereabouts are definitely picked up again in late March when he decided to go to New York City. He wrote to Bishop Carroll from there on April 5th. His own declared intention was to work in harmony with the pastor of New York; but although the Bishop wrote to Father O'Brien on the matter, the New York pastor absolutely refused to receive

<sup>75</sup> Rev. Wm. O'Brien to Bishop Carroll, April 14, 1796.

<sup>76</sup> Rev. James H. O'Donnell, in *Hist. of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (Boston, 1899), II, 117, citing *The Norwich Packet* of Nov. 14, 1793.

<sup>77</sup> The Catholic tradition of Hartford in the early nineteenth century also pointed out Father Thayer as the earliest English-speaking Catholic priest to visit that city. It is related that Father Thayer "visited Hartford and explained the doctrines of Catholicity in the Centre Presbyterian meeting-house, then under the charge of Mr. Strong. This was the first public instruction on the part of any Catholic clergyman given in the English language" (*Boston Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842).



him, and Father Thayer again had recourse to the good offices of Father Matignon. The latter wrote to Bishop Carroll on June 24, 1796, stating that he had heard from Father Thayer at the end of May, and did not know what his situation in New York was since then:

but I have reason to fear that it is very disagreeable. That is certainly not your fault, Monseigneur, for you do everything in your power to satisfy him, without sacrificing the higher interest of peace. But you will surely excuse a friend who suffers for a friend, whom he esteems and sincerely cherishes, and against whom there is reason to believe several of his brethren unduly prejudiced. I can at least assure you of my confidence that Mr. Thayer was sincere when he said that he went to New York only with the express resolve to live under Mr. O'Brien's authority and to avoid giving him the slightest umbrage. I fear that his sufferings, which indeed he exaggerates to himself, may make him take up again this idea of leaving the States and depriving us of a valuable worker. But, Monseigneur, you are judge and sovereign pastor, and it belongs to me less than to any one else, considering my little wisdom, knowledge of the diocese or experience, to make any suggestions to you in this regard.<sup>78</sup>

Father Thayer did not succeed in making a place for himself in New York City.<sup>79</sup> In early August he went from there to Albany to investigate the possibilities in that district, and by the 1st of November set out for Canada to collect money for the Albany church. Before leaving New York City, he had obtained a conditional exeat from Bishop Carroll.

## VII

In the meantime, the only other priest who had been assigned to New England had also left the Diocese. Father Ciquart, the traveling companion of Father Matignon from Europe, had come here to be the missionary of the Indians in Maine.

<sup>78</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 24, 1796 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 7).

<sup>79</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, Bishop Carroll to Father Thayer, July 5, 1796; Father Thayer to Bishop Carroll, Sept. 30, 1796.

Bishop Carroll had tried in vain to obtain Federal aid for the Catholic instruction of the Indians of Maine among others, and sent a memorial on the subject, dated March 20, 1792, to President George Washington. The latter in his answer declared that these Indians were

according to the best information I can obtain, so situated as to be rather considered a part of the inhabitants of the State of Massachusetts than otherwise, and that state has always considered them as under its immediate care and protection. Any application therefore relative to these Indians, for the purpose mentioned (instructing them in the principles and duties of Christianity) would seem most proper to be made to the government of Massachusetts.<sup>80</sup>

Whether the Bishop accordingly made application to this Government is not known: certainly however, the expenses of Father Ciquart's voyage were paid, not by the State, but by the Church. "The entire charge of sending [Father Ciquart] to the Indians in the eastern extremity of Massachusetts" was borne by the Sulpicians of St. Mary's Seminary, in Baltimore.<sup>81</sup>

Father Ciquart arrived at Passamaquoddy about October 10, 1792, armed with the Bishop's letter of introduction to the Indians.<sup>82</sup> The fervent missionary did more than make long emotional discourses to the Indians.<sup>83</sup> He also worked ardently in conjunction with Colonel Allan to obtain a stable settlement for his new charges. An Indian council was convoked, which sent a petition to the Massachusetts General Court.<sup>84</sup>

It was as a result of this petition and the recommendation of

<sup>80</sup> Washington to Bishop Carroll, April 10, 1792 (*The Writings of Washington*, ed. by W. C. Ford, XII, 257).

<sup>81</sup> Bishop Carroll to Roman Catholic clergy, Jan. 28, 1793, printed in Joseph William Ruane, *The Beginnings of the Society of St. Sulpice in the United States* (Washington, 1935), p. 70.

<sup>82</sup> Dated Aug. 8, 1792, original in *N.E. Hist. Gen. Society*.

<sup>83</sup> *Archives du Presbytère de Saint-Sulpice*, Montreal (kindness of M. Bonin, SS.).

<sup>84</sup> *Mass. Arch., Acts of 1792-1793*, chap. 185. This petition was accompanied by a letter from John Allan, who had arranged this conference with the Indians. He urged that land be assigned to them and given to them inalienably. This resulted in the appointment of a committee to confer with the Indians and arrange the assigning of lands.

the committee to the General Court, that the Massachusetts Government provided the Indians with a permanent home on Lieutenant Atterell's Island, since called Indian Island. But when in the following year that also was ascertained to be in British territory, Massachusetts acquired a tract of one hundred acres at Pleasant Point and gave ten of these to the Indians.<sup>85</sup>

Before this lastnamed settlement had been arranged, however, many of the St. John's and some Micmacs had solicited the Canadian Government to invite Father Ciquart to reside among them on the St. John River. General Carleton accordingly offered Father Ciquart an annual salary of fifty pounds sterling to do so. The missionary himself, who was receiving little if any recompense from the Indians, accepted the offer, and, having arranged with Bishop Carroll and Bishop Hubert to pass from the Baltimore to the Quebec jurisdiction, took up his residence on the Canadian side of the border in August, 1794.<sup>86</sup>

To fill the gap left by the departure of Fathers Thayer and Ciquart from New England, Father Matignon was soon to be joined by Father Cheverus, his friend and former penitent. The latter's arrival in Boston on October 3, 1796, heartily rejoiced the zealous pastor and ended the four-year period of his comparative solitude. What he had accomplished during that time is truly deserving the name of second foundation. Even the incomplete picture of it that has been drawn here is proof of that, and may, in a measure, supply the regretted lack of a real likeness in portrait or sculpture of the saintly pastor himself.

<sup>85</sup> *Passamaquoddy Papers* (original Memo. by Nathan W. Marston) and *Act of March 4, 1801*.

<sup>86</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites pastorales*, p. 125; Father Nagot to Bishop of Quebec, May 1, 1794 (printed in English translation in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 175, although incorrectly dated 1796; Bishop of Quebec to Father Ciquart, June 24, 1794; Father Ciquart to Bishop of Quebec, Sept. 3, 1794 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*). On Father Ciquart, see *Vie de quelques membres de la Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice, qui ont été envoyés dans les missions des Etats-Unis, à l'époque de la Révolution française* (typewritten copy at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore); Father Ciquart's story, pp. 621-641, taken from his own ms. formerly in archives of Presbytère of St. Sulpice, Montreal (mutilated); see also *La Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice en Canada* (Montreal, 1912), p. 66 (read Detroit instead of Nouvelle Orléans); *Sulpiciana* (Montreal, 1926), p. 183 (with same correction).

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST YEARS OF FATHER CHEVERUS IN BOSTON (1796-1799)

WITH THE COMING of his new helper, Father Matignon made greater progress even than before. The younger man, brilliant in personality, strong in physique, humble in zeal and piety, and possessing a good knowledge of the English language, was the fitted instrument to carry out and supplement the delicate pastor's steady and practical endeavors to raise up here a truly Catholic body. The work with the Indians was resumed on a new and promising footing, in which it progressed for the next whole generation. The Church's activity was extended to other towns than Boston, and small Catholic groups from Calais in Maine to Plymouth were regularly visited by the missionary. In the metropolis itself, the congregation, which had already grown so much that purchase of the old church and its enlargement were contemplated, continued its progress until a new and more commodious structure was needed. Meanwhile, the congregation had become overwhelmingly Irish in make-up, and under its two saintly French leaders began to give the Boston world a vision of Catholic unity.

#### I

The new curate was twenty-eight years old when he arrived here. He was a member of that *petite noblesse* with which France abounded in the days before the Revolution. He was descended from André Lefebvre, the first of the family to bear the title de Cheverus, who died in 1570. Until the early eighteenth century, the family lived at the Manoir de Cheverus, in the commune of St. Hilaire, in the county of Chailland, near the city of Laval. Afterwards, they lived at Mayenne, where the



future Bishop of Boston was born on January 28, 1768. At that time, the elder de Cheverus family consisted of three brothers, who were largely in control of the town's affairs. The future Bishop's father was the municipal judge, one of his two uncles was the mayor, and the other was pastor of a parish in the city.

According to the style of the time, the new baby was given a long name when he was baptized by his uncle in Notre Dame, his parish church. He was called Jean-Louis-Anne-Madeleine Lefebvre de Cheverus. Naturally destined for the law, the bureau, or the Church, he chose the last, and at the end of his grammar grades in the public school of Mayenne was sent for his later studies to Paris. There he spent what would be equivalent to our high and preparatory school period in the Collège Louis-le-Grand (1781-1786 inc.), and finally entered the Seminary of St. Magloire, which was under the care of the Oratorian Fathers.

His earliest biographer wrote eulogistically of his youthful piety, virtue, and talents; and the ample evidence of the Bishop's later life tends to justify what at first seems exaggerated in that description.<sup>1</sup>

By reason of his talents, and through the influence of his family, John was granted an ecclesiastical benefice when he was about twelve years old, to aid him in the pursuit of his studies for the priesthood. According to the custom of those days, he also received tonsure about the same time. He was likewise

<sup>1</sup> J. Huen-Dubourg (pseud.), *Vie du Cardinal de Cheverus* (Paris, 1837). The author's real name was André J. M. Hamon. He was the rector of the Seminary of Bordeaux while Cheverus was Archbishop there. For some time he lived with the Archbishop. He died rector of St. Sulpice in Paris. The *Life* appeared first at Paris and Lyons, August, 1837, under the name of Huen-Dubourg. It ran through three editions in five years, was translated into several languages, and crowned by the French Academy in 1841. There were two English translations, one by E. Stewart (Boston, 1839), the other by R. Walsh (Philadelphia, 1839). Stewart's translation is particularly valuable, being accompanied by an appendix, which notes some of the sources used by Hamon and corrects some of his errors. In this latter regard, Stewart is much more valuable than a writer in the *Daily Advertiser and Patriot*, January 30, 1839. Stewart's translation was used by Hamon for corrections inserted in his own second edition. It was probably made available to Hamon by the Rev. Patrick Byrne, then pastor of St. Mary's, Charlestown. Cf. L. Bertrand, *Bibliothèque Sulpicienne* (2 vols.: Paris, 1910), II, 351-362.

given the diocesan scholarship in the Collège Louis-le-Grand. Thus the expenses of his schooling at Paris were taken care of.

He evidently looked after his own extra expenses at the Seminary, for he appears to have won a competitive scholarship there. Furthermore, perhaps in fulfillment of conditions attached to this scholarship, he gave lessons in logic in the college, even in his third year of theology (1788-1789). At the end of that year he received his Bachelorate of Theology. He was preparing for the Licentiate, and had been ordained deacon in October, 1790, when his Bishop arranged for his ordination. A dispensation from Rome was required, for the Abbé Cheverus was not yet twenty-three years old. Much courage also was required, inasmuch as the newly begun French Revolution seemed to promise a priest only the choice between apostasy or persecution. Ordained on December 18, 1790, at the last public ordination of that period in Paris, he celebrated his first Mass at Mayenne, on Christmas Eve.

Immediately appointed first assistant at Notre Dame and vicar to his uncle, who was suffering from paralysis, and also honored with the title of Canon, the new priest manifested extraordinary zeal and a rare prudence. Nor did he lack strength of character. When called upon to take the oath demanded by the Civil Constitution of the clergy, he refused it (February 12, 1791) except in a modified form. The other priests of his parish did the same, quite in contrast to the clergy of St. Martin's, the other church of the city. These latter were radically in favor of the new order. Those who opposed the law finally had to suffer. The two Cheverus', uncle and nephew, were compelled to give up their church and the priests' house; the young vicar said Mass in a room of his father's home. When the uncle died (January, 1792) and the nephew was made curé by the legitimate Bishop, he could not take possession. Finally (after March 23, 1792), he was sent with more than four hundred other non-jurors to Laval, to a concentration camp. Cheverus escaped from there toward the end of June, and went to Paris, where in September he was enabled, according to the law of August 26th, to get a passport to leave the

country. In mid-September he arrived in England to join the large number of French refugee clergy already there.<sup>2</sup>

In England, Father Cheverus manifested the same industry, zeal, piety, and charity which had characterized his previous years. He supported himself by teaching French and mathematics in a non-Catholic boarding-school, and then by giving private lessons in mathematics to the child of an English nobleman. He refused to share in the relief given to French refugees by the English Government. About a year after he arrived in England, when he had learned enough of the language to preach, he obtained faculties from the Vicar Apostolic of London to exercise the ministry in the neighborhood of the school where he had been teaching. Many Irish folk lived there, and some French had also moved in. Gradually, he gathered a congregation, later established a chapel, and finally took up his residence in an adjacent lodging. This was at Tottenham, some six miles from London. There he labored for two years and a half, i.e., until mid-July, 1796. Meanwhile, he served the chapel faithfully, and made his lodging also a place of refuge for other French ecclesiastics. Finally, when he was about to set out for America, he left to the little congregation and his successor all the furnishings that he had been able to get together for the purposes of divine service.<sup>3</sup>

Father Cheverus' decision to come to America was the result of many letters of invitation sent to him by Father Matignon, whom he had known and esteemed as a professor in Paris.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See especially A. Angot, *Dictionnaire de la Mayenne* (Laval, 1900-1910); Dom Paul Piolin, *L'Eglise du Mans durant la Révolution* (4 vols.: Le Mans, 1868-1871); and *Notes on Cheverus in Boston Dioc. Arch. Copies*.

<sup>3</sup> The whole will was printed in *The Tablet*, May 4, 1878, p. 558; also in Plasse, *Le Clergé Français, réfugié en Angleterre* (Paris, 1886), II, 305. Father Cheverus' first baptismal record in the parish register is dated March 19, 1794; his last March 18, 1796. The will is dated July 17, 1796. For this little parish the zealous priest obtained "three cottages at the end of Queen St. [still in existence], one of which served as a chapel, one as a school, and the third as a residence for the priest. . . ." The register was still in the parish in 1936 (Memorandum by Rev. Cyril Sowerby, parish priest of Tottenham, May 4, 1936, in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>4</sup> Hamon apparently knew of only one such letter, but Father Cheverus himself mentioned many. Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 26, 1797 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

The first of these was an invitation to take charge of an academy here. What the academy was is not known.<sup>5</sup>

There is, however, an interesting hypothesis concerning it which should be mentioned in this connection. It has to do with an invitation to Father Cheverus<sup>6</sup> to take charge of a college about to be established "at Cayenne." As there are many difficulties about accepting Cayenne as the real place of that projected college and as those difficulties would disappear if the college was in America, it is possible that the incident had reference to this country. It is known that Father Thayer was, from the beginning of his ministry, interested in establishing a Catholic school here; that he dedicated his fortune to that purpose, and that when he was called away from Boston, he made Father Matignon his attorney. What Hamon wrote about Cayenne might really have been true of Father Thayer's intended foundation in Boston. The date assigned by Hamon to the incident in question was the later months of 1794 or the first months of 1795.<sup>7</sup> Father Thayer's intention to leave America was contained in a letter written to Bishop Carroll on August 12, 1794. It is, therefore, not improbable that in late 1794, Father Matignon, faced with the threatened departure of Father Thayer, invited Father Cheverus to come over to replace him; and made especial mention of the projected Catholic school here. Father Cheverus, interested at the time in the ill-fated Quiberon expedition of a return to France, refused the offer.<sup>8</sup>

Father Matignon's circumstances in Boston indicate that his invitations to Father Cheverus were particularly connected with the departure of Father Thayer from the work in Boston, and also with Father Ciquart's abandoning the Indian mission in Maine. In both these regards the zealous Boston pastor had undoubtedly sought replacements from his friends in Europe, and in England especially. His situation in late 1795, and early 1796, with Father Thayer employed in Connecticut and (per-

<sup>5</sup> Rev. John Pierce, *Memoirs* (ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>6</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Echo de la Mayenne*, vol. 17, Dec. 18, 1907.

<sup>8</sup> *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 38.



haps) Rhode Island, occasioned his emphasizing northern New England and the Indian mission in Maine in a further invitation to Father Cheverus. Father Matignon explained to him the need in America, and more particularly in New England, of priests who could speak English. He represented to him the great importance of this district and set before his view a new Church to be formed in this new country. He explained that there were Catholics scattered over this immense tract and exposed to the loss of their faith by the dearth of priests as well as by the violent ill-will to the Catholic religion of the non-Catholic population. He described the latter as divided into some thirty different religious sects, but united in the opposition to what they called Popery. Was not this vast field worthy of his zeal and devotion, especially as England was overcrowded with priests? <sup>9</sup>

Father Cheverus took time for deliberation: "he prayed, he asked counsel, weighed all the reasons on both sides of the question, and at length, after such hesitation as prudence demanded, he decided to join the worthy Abbé Matignon." He then made a legal renunciation of his family inheritance and set out for Boston.

Father Cheverus arrived in Boston on October 3rd, on the ship *Galen*, Eddy, captain. The new priest spent the night at the Hancock House, and went at once to see Father Matignon, who was boarding at Mrs. Lobb's. Of course, he made it his first business to write Bishop Carroll begging to be received by him in the number of his sheep. He included under the same cover other letters, among them one from Bishop Douglas, Vicar Apostolic of London, directed to the Bishop, which contained many complimentary statements about the young priest. All these letters were lost in transit, so that the new missionary's presence in America was first made known to Bishop Carroll by a letter from Father Matignon, dated about Christmas time.

On its receipt the Bishop at once wrote to Father Cheverus (January 10, received in Boston January 19, 1797), indicating his pleasure at the priest's arrival and also his embarrassment

<sup>9</sup> Paraphrase of Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 39.

about sending him to the Indian mission of Maine. He spoke of this mission as one which was "not American" and which was "so far advanced into the country, that he [Father Cheverus] would only rarely and with difficulty get news from the numerous friends in Europe to whom he was fondly devoted." Likewise, it was a place "where he would have to wear the cassock habitually, because its inhabitants were used to seeing their clergymen in a long dress." It was also a mission in which one of his duties would be to reconcile the people "to all the measures of the humane and liberal government they live under."<sup>10</sup>

Likewise, the Bishop was evidently somewhat troubled about the new priest's means of support in this mission, as well as the payment of the expenses of his journey thither.

The new priest, in his answer, January 26, 1797, showed himself all zeal and humility.

I shall set off for the place you will be pleased to send me to, as soon as I have received your orders. Be so kind as to let me know the cheapest way of travelling, of conveying my trunk, etc. I believe I could travel on foot. Send me where you think I am most wanted, without making yourself anxious about the means of supporting me. I am willing to work with my hands, if need should be; and I believe I have strength enough to do it. I am in good health and not yet thirty years of age.

I have none of the things necessary to celebrate the holy sacrifice of the Mass: shall I find them where I am going? [As to wearing the cassock] this will be a little hard upon me, for I am worth but one cassock; the rest of my clothing is such as missionaries usually wear in England. . . .<sup>11</sup>

A month later, when no reply from the Bishop was forthcoming, Father Matignon himself wrote to Bishop Carroll (February 24, 1797). His chief purpose in so doing was to ask the Bishop to leave Father Cheverus in Boston at least until the autumn, unless this would be absolutely incompatible with the

<sup>10</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 26, 1797; Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 24, 1797 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 M 9, and 5 G 8).

<sup>11</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 M 9.

best good of the American Church. He informed the Bishop that the whole Boston congregation desired it, and that the New England mission literally required it or would at any rate greatly benefit by it.

Later events show that Bishop Carroll acquiesced in Father Matignon's wish, and left the new priest with him at Boston. Thus began a fruitful ministry and a priestly friendship, which endured over twenty years and ended only with the saintly pastor's death.

## II

In Father Cheverus' first years here his work with the Maine Indians looms large. Just at the time of his arrival in Boston, a particularly favorable opportunity for that work was being opened up. In the summer of 1796, a commission appointed by the Government of Massachusetts had successfully carried through a final land settlement with the Penobscot Indians. On August 1, 1796, it had obtained a release of all the tribe's claims to land above Nichols' Rock at The Bend, near the head of the tide, excepting Old Town Island and the islands in the river above it for thirty miles.<sup>12</sup>

The Massachusetts commissioners also promised the Indians at that time to use their influence on the subject of enabling them "to have a minister of their own religion settled among them."<sup>13</sup> There can be little doubt that this promise played some part in the success of the land settlement. Likewise, there can be little doubt that Father Matignon was interested in the religious part of the conference.

<sup>12</sup> The consideration for the release was "one hundred and fifty yards of blue woollens, four hundred pounds of shot, one hundred pounds of powder, one hundred bushels of corn, thirteen bushels of salt, thirty-six hats, one barrel of rum, and an annual stipend of 300 bushels of Indian corn, fifty pounds of powder, 200 pounds of shot, and 75 yards of blue woollen cloth, fit for garments." The territory relinquished by the Indians embraced 189,426 acres, which was afterwards surveyed into nine townships in 1797, by S. Town. After confirming the thirty-two old settlers in their lots, the Government offered the remainder for sale at a dollar per acre. It was supposed that this tribe was now reduced to three hundred and fifty souls. 1 *Colls. Maine Hist. Soc.*, VII, 19; W. Williamson, *History of Maine*, II (Hallowell, 1839), 571 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Father Matignon to the General Court, *Mass. Arch., Petitions*, June 27, 1798.

Father Matignon made some preparations, probably with the help of Colonel John Allan, to press the Indians' religious claim with the Massachusetts Government, and it was proposed that the Indians themselves initiate the attempt by sending delegates to the Legislature and asking a state subsidy for a priest.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, Father Matignon wrote to Father Ciquart, then in New Brunswick, to provide the Maine Indians with spiritual aid, if possible, during the coming Paschal season.<sup>15</sup>

In the latter part of June, 1797, several chief men of both tribes visited Boston on their mission to the Government, and made their official request for a priest. They had failed, however, to consult Father Matignon about "the very important point of supporting the priest," and the State made no spontaneous offer to do so. In their disappointment they made such an impression on Father Matignon that he determined to go to them himself, without any assurance of his expenses. Nevertheless, despite a letter<sup>16</sup> announcing this visit, the pastor himself did not go. After a month he sent Father Cheverus in his stead, providing him with the following letter of introduction to the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Indians:

Boston, July 22, 1797

My dear Brothers,

I doubt not that you will welcome the worthy Missionary, who, influenced solely by his zeal and his love for you, leaves here today to visit you, and also to furnish you the aid and comfort of religion, as well as to advise with you on the means of obtaining a permanent resident Missionary, to act as your Father, Protector, and Guide in the way of salvation. . . .

We had first hoped that the government of this state would contribute toward the expenses of this journey; but it has not done so. If your delegates had made a request for this and had consulted with us for this purpose, perhaps they might have

<sup>14</sup> Deduced from Fathers Matignon-Cheverus letters of June-July, 1797.

<sup>15</sup> From the correspondence of Father Matignon with Bishop Carroll, and with the Indians themselves, one gets the definite impression that Father Cheverus was regarded by Father Matignon as too valuable a priest to be assigned regularly to the Indians.

<sup>16</sup> Photostat of original in French in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*; see also *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XIX (1902), 176. The letter is dated June 26, 1797.



obtained it. The residence of a permanent missionary among you will depend on the efforts which you yourselves will make, together with the aid which it is not yet impossible to obtain from the General Court next January.

My well-beloved Brothers:

I would gladly have visited you myself, knowing as I do these last several years your religion, your piety, and your eagerness to profit by spiritual help. But the feeble state of my health and other considerations made it more advisable to have Mr. Cheverus make the trip. Your delegates met him here. While he is among you, we will be united in prayers that God will bless his ministry among you, make you all produce fruits of blessing and salvation, strengthen you in faith and charity, and fill you with all kinds of grace, both spiritual and temporal.<sup>17</sup>

Father Cheverus arrived at Pleasant Point on July 30th. While he was at Cobsecook, the previous day, he was fortunately able to lay hold of some letters from Father Ciquart, which an Indian messenger was just about to post on the ship. These letters contained the news that the New Brunswick priest was already visiting the Penobscot tribe. They also gave Father Cheverus divers bits of information and advice about the Indians' general mode of life, and particularly their drinking habits.

Of the four letters which Father Cheverus wrote to Father Matignon about his own work at Passamaquoddy, two are extant. They deserve quotation:

As soon as I put my foot on their ground, the Indians fired their guns & gave me all together an hearty & moving wellcome. We walked together to the Church, & after having given thanks to God, I begged him to bless my mission, & addressed them in few words. I was then introduced into the parsonnage house. It is next to the Church. Both are built upon a hill above the indian wigwams. They constructed them both directly after their deputies had brought your letter. MY house (& with pride I say it, for it is a long time since I was in a house

<sup>17</sup> *Portland Dioc. Archives.*

of my own), *my* house is about ten feet square & 8 feet high; the church as large again, but not a great deal higher. In both of them no other materials but bark & few logs of wood & stiks set crossways to support the bark; no windows of course, the only opening is the door. This makes the Church very dark and I can hardly read at the altar. The only piece of furniture in the house is a large table made up of rough boards, no seats &c. I put my mattras on the table & slept last night tolerably well. The altar piece is made up of two pieces of broad cloth, the one scarlet & the other dark blue & several coarse pictures pinned upon them. They were yesterday so overjoyed to see me that they forgot I must eat. They had prepared nothing at all; happily I had brought my two biscuit barrels, & by sending to a farm just by, I got some good milk & butter, & thereby was enabled to dine & sup extremely well. Today I am to be treated with some wild pigeons.

12 o'clock.

So far every thing seems very pleasant, but I am afraid Mr. Ciquart's observations to be exactly true; I have just said an High Mass for the dead & spoke to them about drinking. I have told them I would not admit any body to communion, except they had not got drunk since a very considerable time, about a year. I think I shall have very few communicants, but I cannot expose the sacraments to an almost certain profanation. Yesterday I read to them your letter, & they promised to me that in their application to the general court, they would be entirely guided by us.

They sung this morning the Mass for the Dead exactly upon the same tune as we do. In the *Kyrie* they have preserved the same words & they answer in latin the Preface &c. What courage & patience in the 1st missionaries! . . .

In the second letter Father Cheverus told of a conference which he and Allan had had with the Indians. The latter were willing to adopt any advice which would help them to get a resident priest. Besides, Father Cheverus himself easily perceived that corruption had crept among them because they had no priest. He found that generally they had been good for a year or more after their last communion, and had only re-

lapsed because they had nobody to take care of them. "They are literally like children [he wrote], but properly managed [cared for], I think they would prove dutiful ones. They have been so to me the little time I have been their father."<sup>18</sup>

The missionary did not visit Penobscot that year because of Father Ciquart's trip there. The next year (1798) the new missionary visited both tribes. Leaving Boston in early May he went by boat first to Passamaquoddy. There he had much to console him for his labors. "In this desert," he wrote, "as well as on Mt. Carmel, flowers are found which make the glory of the Garden of the Spouse." He also learned that the Indians were preparing a delegation to petition the Legislature "for a subsidy to pay the priest."<sup>19</sup>

On Monday, June 4th, he arrived at Penobscot after a four days' overland trip. His description of it furnishes a precious bit of missionary literature.

Old Town, Penobscot, June 7, 1798

My dear Pastor

As I suppose you have had by this time plenty of my nonsense in French, I shall now for variety's sake, give you some of it in English.

I arrived here safe & hearty on Monday afternoon. I left pleasant point Passam. on the friday before about noon. It was so bad weather that the Indians themselves begged of me to stop for the night 10 miles from our departure at the mouth of the river Schoudick. I slept at one M. Brewer's who keeps a store & the last post-office in the U.S. He received me politely. . . . 2 canoes from Passam. with the three ones who had come from Penobscot formed our Squadron. Their crews consisted of 8 men, 3 women, 3 children & myself. We encamped in the woods during the three nights of our journeying through the wilderness. We had a great deal of rain & the flies were very troublesome, but I felt no real inconvenience from it, & the two last nights I slept without any interruption from the moment I laid down 'till the dawning of the day. We had no

<sup>18</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, July 31 and August 10, 1797 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 N 12).

<sup>19</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 11 A D 3.

time to build any wigwams, but I slept under the shelter of a canoe . . . From friday at noon, 'till within two miles of this place on monday afternoon, I did not see even a log house. Nothing but woods & water. This was not however a gloomy sight. The land is covered almost everywhere with hard wood which at this time of the year looks beautifully green. There was also in many places as fine grass as I ever saw. I anticipated in my mind the time in which that country will be settled; I indulged the pleasing idea it might one day become the asylum of piety & innocence now persecuted almost everywhere. Full of that hope & in order as it were to consecrate it before hand, I celebrated High Mass & Vespers with my good Indians on Trinity Sunday [June 3rd]. We passed six lakes, 2 pretty large ones through which runs the river Schoudick which takes its rise from the last of them. The carrying place from the end of this last lake to the Penobscot Stream as the Indians call it, is supposed to be about four miles: but I had rather walk 20 at any time. You cannot have any Idea how bad is the way. The piercing eyes of an Indian can alone discover the path, & it requires all their nimbleness & strength to get through it, loaded as they are either with their canoes or other luggage. I fell down half a dozen of times, but did not hurt myself. I thought before (that) I was light footed, & so the Indians say I am, certainly for a white man. But when I compare myself with them, I believe I can crawl nearly as well as a snail. Besides the above carrying place we went over 9 others.

I am without *any exaggeration* very well in my health. So, my Dear Sir, were it even as important to preserve it, as your tender friendship persuades you; be not anxious on that point. How I shall go to Dameriscotti, I do not know yet, but suppose I shall go in a canoe to Belfast 40 miles from here, & then go on horseback & follow the post road.<sup>20</sup>

Constantly employed with the Indians' extremely long confessions; in one period having a two-week stretch with six hours each day in the confessional (slow work because of the need of employing an interpreter); preparing children to receive First Communion; writing out the six-page Indian catechism,

<sup>20</sup> June 7, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 N 13).



which he would feign have abandoned ten times over "had I not been animated by a superior motive"; these were his occupations. He found that corruption and license, especially drunkenness, had made frightful progress; and concluded: "Unless a priest is established here or at least visits here often, all is lost. Fortunately they still have respect for their priest."

At Quoddy there were one hundred and twenty-two natives; at Penobscot two hundred and twenty. "Smallpox [he wrote] has, from time to time, made some terrible ravages among the Indians. That is the principal cause of their being reduced to so small a number. In one winter, it took off three hundred." But the happy priest also wrote:

Plenty of fresh salmon, two partridges, four pigeons and three turtles have supplied my table with abundance. You see I have no great merit in having sent you a tongue of moose; I had a fresh one at Quady . . . it was boiled to rags before I knew anything about it. I really grow fat. However, if yourself and some other good souls will have it that I have led a very hard and mortified life, you are welcome to indulge the pious thought.

I have learnt here how to enjoy with delight many things which I imagined before to be very disagreeable. For instance: never did Zephyr fan me in so pleasant a manner, as does now a good puff of smoke right in my eyes, when it drives away at once thousands of flying insects feasting upon my poor face. Smoke, which makes everything dry and lean, preserves here my *embonpoint*. Were it not for its kind assistance, I would be by this time nothing but skin and bones. The only thing I am afraid of is that my fine complexion will be spoiled, and you must own it will be a great pity.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, the Indian delegation arrived in Boston, and Father Matignon presented to the General Court a petition in their behalf, "to have a minister of their own Religion settled among them."

. . . Their application is grounded, 1st upon a promise several times made to them, at the time of the war with England

<sup>21</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, Penobscot, June 30, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); cf. also *ibid.*, 11 A D 4, 11 A D 5.

... & renewed since, particularly two years ago, 2<sup>ly</sup>, upon their past services; 3<sup>ly</sup>, upon the great utility that will result both to them and to the State from their being enabled to make progress in Virtue, morality, religion, and habits of industry and civilization; & lastly, upon *justice & generosity*: *justice*, since the State is now in possession of lands formerly their own, *generosity* because they are totally unable to do it themselves being reduced to a state of great poverty. . . .<sup>22</sup>

Within two days from the reading of the petition, the General Court gave a favorable answer, passing the resolve

that there be, and hereby is, appropriated, for the support of a teacher of religion and morality, among the Indians, of the tribe of Penobscot and Passamaquoddy, a sum not exceeding two hundred dollars per annum, until the further order of the General Court; the same to be paid out of the public Treasury, to such teacher, as shall produce satisfactory evidence, to the Supreme Executive, of his good moral and political character, and of his having faithfully performed the duty aforesaid, for the time he shall have been employed, and actually resided among the said Indians.<sup>23</sup>

When Father Matignon reported to Bishop Carroll on this grant by the General Court for a resident missionary among the Indians, he declared that the two hundred dollars a year was far more valuable for the time being than lands. He also declared that the trouble would be "to find a priest for the place. It is, if not absolutely necessary, at least very valuable, for him to know English. Assuming Mnsgr. that you have no one for the post, I intend, with your approval, writing to London to find one among our émigré priests."<sup>24</sup>

He was convinced that Father Cheverus would be of greater value to the Church as his curate than as pastor to the Indians.

<sup>22</sup> Petition of Father Matignon to the General Court, June 27, 1798 (ms. in *Mass. Archives*).

<sup>23</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves, 1798-1799* (ed. of 1897), p. 217.

<sup>24</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 10.

## III

Outside Boston there were two missions which Father Cheverus began to serve as soon as he had received from the Bishop his assignment as Father Matignon's assistant. One of the missions was to the north, the other to the south of Boston: the former centred in Newburyport, the latter in Plymouth.

In early January, 1797, Father Matignon, leaving Father Cheverus at Boston, went to Wrentham, thus inaugurating the work on the mission south of Boston. It was the pastor's first known trip since early 1794. He repeated it in May.

Meanwhile, he had sent Father Cheverus to resume the work begun by Father Thayer on the northern mission. The new curate's first known mission work was at Newburyport.

The outbreak of the French Revolution had occasioned the formation in Newburyport of a French (Catholic) colony,<sup>25</sup> constituted chiefly of refugees from the islands. From Martinique in 1789 came a certain Henry Marie Louis, and from Guadeloupe, in the same year, came the Perrin and Bottau families.

In 1793, Father Thayer visited Newburyport and baptized there on September 1st. Father Matignon was there in October and went on to Portsmouth, New Hampshire; he repeated these visits in February, 1794. The Catholics served on both occasions were all French.

After that, for the three years until 1797, there is no record extant of any priest's visit to either place. Whether Father Thayer or Father Matignon sometimes visited and the records are missing does not appear. In this connection the remark is in place that, while baptism and marriage records prove the presence of Catholic people and priests, their silence does not prove the contrary.

During the three years in question some new Catholic arrivals in Newburyport increased the size of the group already there. Among them two or three individuals should be mentioned by name. One of these was Nicholas Cools Godfrey, of Newbury-

<sup>25</sup> John J. Currier, *History of Newburyport* (1906), I, 114 ff.

port, whose son became a grateful benefactor of Father Cheverus in later life; another was the interesting Dr. Francis Vergnies de Bonischère, a medical man, then about fifty years of age, who deserved well of Newburyport in the epidemic of 1798, and who was also a dear friend of the priest's. A third was the French wife of the Newburyport sea-captain, William Cutter. This Catholic lady opened her home for divine services when the priest visited the town.<sup>26</sup> The first names met with are all French. The Renard and the Barbotheau families were represented, both of which names are found on later Catholic Newburyport records.

From Newburyport, Father Cheverus proceeded to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where he again ministered to some French families, Prilay and Louis by name. The priest then turned back to Boston and called at Salem, where he also baptized. In this case the subjects were the children of an Irish family, and the godfather was one John Moriarty, who had been a helper of Father Thayer.

Hardly back from the Newburyport-Portsmouth-Salem mission, Father Cheverus went, in early June, 1797, on the southern mission. He is known to have gone at least as far as Plymouth, where he supplied the baptismal ceremonies for a child in the family of Michael Fitzgerald. The sponsors on this occasion were John Fitzgerald and Mary Keef.

It was on his return from this mission that Father Cheverus went to the Maine Indians for the first time. He had intended, according to the plans of Father Matignon, to use this Indian mission as an opportunity for visiting the English-speaking Catholics of the Maine districts as well, but his purpose was partly frustrated by Father Ciquart's unexpected journey to Penobscot. Only near Passamaquoddy did the new missionary attempt to get in touch with other Catholics than the Indians.

In his inquiries he discovered some five or six Irish families. All the non-Catholics whom he met were "extremely polite" and all expressed a desire to hear him preach, and, as he reported, to Father Matignon (August 10th), "I have some hopes

<sup>26</sup> Currier, *op. cit.*, p. 118.



of being able to throw some seeds in this wild soil which, with the grace of God, may in time produce fruits of life and immortality." He had already written his pastor on this matter, saying, "The only ministers in these parts are what they call the New Lights: but the few people I have seen appear disgusted with them" (July 31, 1797).

On Father Cheverus' return from Passamaquoddy in early September, 1797, he made a short trip to Bedford (near Manchester), New Hampshire, and baptized Anna, the daughter of Bryant and Margaret Cavanagh; and two children of Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Rice. On this occasion he stayed at the house of one Theodore Goffe, who many years later became a Catholic himself.<sup>27</sup>

On November 4, 1797, Father Cheverus was again on the southern mission. On that day, in Plymouth, he baptized a two-year-old son of Dennis Macarthy. The sponsors were John Moricy (*sic*) and Catherine O'Leary.

In January, 1798, Father Cheverus made his second known visit to Newburyport. On this visit, besides baptizing some French children, he baptized the son of Irish parents named Mr. and Mrs. William Keef, and also a woman twenty-five years old, named Elizabeth McLanan. The names Davey and Norton appear among the sponsors.

In April, 1798, Father Cheverus was in Carver, near Plymouth, and on the 12th baptized the daughter of John Moricy and Thankful (Bumpus) his wife. The godparents were Columbus (*sic*) Dwyer and Martha Bumpus. He also performed baptisms in the families of Dennis Macarthy and Edmund O'Leary. The godparents were Joseph O'Brien and Bridget Keef. On his return trip to Boston, Father Cheverus also baptized in Scituate, in the family of Michael Clap, which, he stated, was the only Catholic family in town.

When he made his second visit to Passamaquoddy in 1798, he had some thirteen English-speaking Catholics there go to confession.

<sup>27</sup> *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (2 vols.: Boston, 1899), I, 584.

At Cobsecook he discovered also an Irish family named Maher, consisting of father, mother, and five children; all of these last he baptized. Finally, at Pleasant Point, he baptized a child of the Doyle family.

Father Cheverus anticipated visiting next the Irish to be met with between Penobscot and Boston, especially at Damariscotta and Newcastle. On his way toward that Catholic centre, Father Cheverus preached on Sunday, June 24th, at one Mr. Emmer-son's, some fifteen miles below Old Town on the Penobscot, where three hundred people gathered to hear him. "For all that [he wrote], no conversions." From Penobscot also, he wrote (June 22, 1798) that

there are no preachers at all in these countries: without a doubt, a zealous Catholic priest could, in time, make converts here. If I had known at first, that the parents had neglected to teach their children their prayers and their catechism, I would never have admitted so many of them to Holy Communion.

So, finally in early July, 1798, Father Cheverus came to Damariscotta, the home of the famous Kavanagh family.<sup>28</sup>

James Kavanagh was a native of New Ross County, Wexford, Ireland, and came to Boston in 1781, when he was twenty-five years of age, and went soon afterwards to Newcastle in Maine. He had initiative and probably some means also, and entered into partnership with another Catholic Irishman, Matthew Cottrill, to start a shipbuilding and merchant business in the Damariscotta River district.<sup>29</sup> Their first known enterprise was the formation of a corporation on February 11, 1795, to build a bridge over the river near the falls. Both were married at the time, Cottrill to a certain Lydia House, and Kavanagh to a certain Sarah (Elizabeth) Jackson. Both marriages were performed in Boston by Father Matignon, the former on November 8, 1793, the latter on June 16, 1794. Their partnership

<sup>28</sup> E. Kavanagh to Bishop Fenwick, Feb. 18, 1832 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>29</sup> During their period of business, which lasted until the war of 1812, they built probably twenty-five vessels. D. Cushman, *History of Ancient Sheepscot and Newcastle* (Bath, 1882), p. 330.

dated back beyond even the earlier of these dates, because their names appear together as contributors to the church expenses in Boston as early as April, 1793, the earliest year for which a record is extant. Indeed, they were the largest subscribers to the Boston church then and for many years to come. It may be gathered from minor bits of information that, although they lived in Maine, it was their custom to come to Boston at least once a year, and always at the Paschal season.

They had long desired the visit of a priest: and by want of one were in possible danger of losing the faith. For in the years before 1797, when they learned of Father Cheverus' expected visit, both Kavanagh and Cottrill had sometimes gone to the Cóngregational church on Sundays.

In 1797, however, when the town of Newcastle obtained a settled Protestant minister, the selectmen were so conscious of Kavanagh's Catholicity that they gave an order to the tax collector, discharging him from paying any ministerial rate for that year. The town meeting, however, refused to ratify the exemption, so that Kavanagh and the other Catholics were double-taxed.

It has been stated that this group of families were seven in number and that all of them came from Ireland.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the earliest of them to settle here was the Hanley family, which came from Ireland in the late seventies, and settled in Bristol. This family consisted of two married brothers, Patrick and Roger, and their wives, Agnes and Margaret, respectively. Patrick had nine children, still living in 1798. At that same date Richard and his wife had six children.

There were two other Irish Catholic families in Bristol whose children Father Cheverus baptized on this trip: the family of Richard and Lydia Meagher (with three children, the oldest born in 1790) and the family of James and Delight Clark (with two children, the elder born in 1795).

After 1795, the Jackson family joined this group. Andrew

<sup>30</sup> Greenleaf, *Ecclesiastical History of Maine* (Portsmouth, 1821), p. 235. In 1798, Father Cheverus preached in a barn near Cottrill's and said Mass in Cottrill's house. Greenleaf, *loc. cit.*

Jackson and his wife, Margaret (Newport) Jackson, appear early in Boston Catholic history. The former had been born in 1734, and so was nearly sixty years old when he and his wife were sponsors at a Catholic baptism in Boston. From then on their names, especially Mrs. Jackson's, are frequently found in the church records as sponsors. The names cease after May, 1795.

As their daughter Sarah (or Elizabeth) had been married on June 16, 1794, to James Kavanagh, it may be supposed that they went to live with her at Damariscotta. They were certainly there in July, 1799, when Margaret Kavanagh was baptized. The old gentleman died in Newcastle on July 7, 1811, aged seventy-four. The Jacksons, together with the Kavanaghs, Cottrills, and Hanleys, were the nucleus of the new Catholic congregation that Father Cheverus formed in Maine. When he went on these missionary trips he carried with him certain Catholic books to sell or distribute. These may be described in general as the Challoner books, those same Catholic classics already described as offered a few years before by Father Thayer. Long before 1797, Father Thayer's supply had been exhausted, and Father Matignon was ordering from Matthew Carey, the Catholic publisher in Philadelphia, new copies of the *Bible*, the *Garden of the Soul*, the *Poor Man's Catechism*, and other such Catholic books.<sup>31</sup>

An illuminating example of Father Cheverus' use of these books in his missionary work is furnished in the precious correspondence of the priest with the Hanley family of Bristol. One of the letters resembles a kind of circular letter of instructions:

Every day, say your prayers on your knees, morning and evening with attention and devotion. Every Lord's day and Holy day meet together morning and afternoon. In the morning, begin by the morning prayer on your knees. Read in the

<sup>31</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, IX (1898), 468 ff.; Burton, *Challoner*, I, 127 ff. Father Matignon considered the *Garden of the Soul* an excellent book, although "still susceptible of some improvement," and expressed the hope that Carey would print it again very soon. He had traded with Carey on previous occasions, and had in stock some copies of *The Manual*.



Manual, What every Christian must believe. P.3 . . . 8. Then the prayers at Mass with the Epistle and the Gospel of the Day. One chapter at least in the poor man's Catechism. Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition, kneeling. P.108.

In the afternoon, a Litany for Sunday, p. 306, kneeling, or else the Universal prayer, or some other. One chapter at least in the poor man's Catechism. Paraphrase on the Lord's prayer, or some other prayers. Let the children recite by heart, every Sunday, something out of the Christian Doctrine. Keep the days of fasting and abstinence as they are set down in the prayer book. Be careful to be well prepared for Confession and Communion against the next time that you will have a priest with you. . . .<sup>32</sup>

The conclusion was especially pointed:

The Catholic Church commands you to have charity for all men, to pray for the salvation of all, and to do good to every one, according to your power, let his Religion be what it will. But the same Church forbids and has in all ages forbidden her children to attend the public worship of any society separated from her.

On his return journey from the Damariscotta district, Father Cheverus stopped at Portland (July 24th), at Portsmouth (July 27th), and at Newburyport (August 1st to 4th), and arrived in Boston (perhaps with a stop at Salem on the trip) by the feast of the Assumption.

In mid-November, he went to Plymouth again; after the New Year, to Newburyport; in July, to Maine; back to Boston in September, and on to Plymouth in November, 1799.

It was the end of his first three years' missionary work in New England and marked an unmistakable epoch in New England Catholic history. Never before had an English-speaking Catholic missionary traversed that whole coastal area: never before had the English-speaking Catholics scattered along that

<sup>32</sup> Rev. John Cheverus . . . to . . . Hanley. No address — no signature; on outside the date, Agost (*sic*) the 4th, 1797. This may have been a kind of circular letter to the families on Damariscotta River, sent when Father Cheverus knew that he couldn't visit them that year (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*). Other letters of the same type are also extant.

extended territory enjoyed the consolations of their religion. In the matter of distance and regularity, he had gone far beyond the pioneer beginnings of Father Thayer.

## IV

Meanwhile, Father Thayer had returned to Boston and made a twelve months' sojourn here from about June 1, 1797, until June, 1798. During that period he helped out on Sundays and by preaching, but did not administer the Sacraments. His situation in this latter regard was the result of his experiences in the preceding twelve months which he spent in Albany and Montreal.

After he received the Exeat, which he had requested from Bishop Carroll in New York and which the Bishop sent him on July 5, 1796, the restless priest had gone to Albany, at the request of Mr. Barry, a rich Catholic of that place.

The people there were planning for a church, and Father Thayer believed that this might furnish opportunity for exercising his ministry, even though he had already announced his intention of leaving the country. Therefore, he wrote to the Bishop, seeking permission to go to Canada, where he collected funds for the Albany church, and also took occasion to make a retreat.

On his return to Albany, Father Thayer found that the church there was divided about his becoming the pastor. When Bishop Carroll heard of this, he told Father Thayer to leave Albany, and the disappointed priest returned to Boston, where his presence is noted before Father Cheverus' departure on his first Maine mission.

From Boston he wrote to Bishop Carroll on November 4, 1797, and in answer thereto received an offer to go to Kentucky. On February 6, 1798, Father Thayer accepted the offer, reluctantly it is true, but none the less obediently. Nevertheless, it took him some three months to make his final preparations for departure.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 B I 5, 6; 8 B I 1, 2; 9 A I 2.

While in Boston, Father Thayer preached on the Fast Day, ordered by the President to be observed throughout the nation on May 9, 1798. Naturally, all the sermons of the day touched the point of French-American relations. Mr. Belknap, for example, tried to show his own consistency in opposing the then existing anti-Catholic French revolutionary government, after having formerly opposed its predecessor, the Catholic French monarchy. To him both were anti-Christian.<sup>34</sup> Father Thayer, on the other hand, preached what Father Cheverus thought was "on the whole an excellent discourse. . . . There was an absolute necessity," Cheverus thought, "to give a forceful summary of facts which many of our people have no desire to believe. The pieces on the Pope and on the persecution are treated on a high plane. I was moved to tears where he speaks of France under the descendants of St. Louis." Father Thayer had the sermon printed, and offered to the church whatever profit might accrue.<sup>35</sup> Father Cheverus had written these things from the Maine woods. He did not have the opportunity of seeing Father Thayer again. That missionary left Boston, bound for Kentucky, some time in June. He never returned to Boston.

While he was in Boston, his help on Sundays and feast days was of especial value during the many and sometimes long absences of Father Cheverus. The American priest also had an opportunity, during Father Cheverus' presence, of witnessing how two French priests lived together in harmony. He saw their saintly friendship, which was so marked that it later passed almost into a legend. From the time that Father Cheverus came to the city, the holy pastor had been all kindness to him, as indeed he always had been and continued to be to Father Thayer also. Father Cheverus, on his side, returned this, by both help and affection for him whom even from the first he called "the dear Doctor."<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Printed in Boston, 1798 (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>35</sup> Father Thayer, *A Discourse . . . 9th of May, 1798* (Hall, Boston, 1798); *Columbian Centinel*, May 29, 1798; Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, May 29, June 22, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 11 A D 5).

<sup>36</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 26, 1797.

The curate had hardly got settled in Boston, in fact he had not yet received a reply to his first letter from Bishop Carroll, when he assisted Father Matignon in putting on the first known Catholic parish activity here. It was a concert held on St. Cecilia's day, 1796, the net receipts of which were \$14.92. There was a Boston tradition that both he and Father Matignon loved and promoted church music, and that when one celebrated the High Mass, the other assisted in the choir.<sup>37</sup> Both employed their talent also to aid the church in another way.

Father Matignon was at that time planning to enlarge the church's facilities. On February 24, 1797, he wrote Bishop Carroll, "We have been refused permission to buy the little chapel which we occupy, and are thus prevented from working towards its enlargement, which would now be necessary. Lack of money forbids our thinking of the purchase or erection of another."

Nevertheless, he had been saving every penny, of which he kept a scrupulous account, to prepare for the inevitable progress and its needs. On January 20, 1797, he had \$244.25 in the church treasury. Out of this he put \$237 into the purchase of 5 per cent notes of the State of Massachusetts, face value \$300. On July 1st, he invested \$66.94 more in the same public funds. His ability to accomplish this is amazing, given the fact, for example, that the Christmas collection in 1796 amounted only to \$32. The next year's collection showed an increase to \$49, with 55 persons subscribing as against 43 subscribers in 1796.

On March 3, 1798, a subscription was begun for the purpose of purchasing a spot of land to build a church. David Fitzgerald started it off with \$5; Mr. Cypriano gave a gold ring "valued by him at a hundred dollars, but which was offered to several merchants and others, none of whom would offer any price for it." It was finally sold for \$25. Mr. Keating gave \$20, but received Pew number 30 in exchange. Mr. Barry, of Baltimore, contributed \$10. The sale of Father Thayer's sermon brought \$18. Nevertheless, by the end of the year the total contribu-

<sup>37</sup> Rev. A. S. Healy, "A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Catholicity in . . . Boston," in *The Cathedral* (Boston, Oct. 24 and following, 1871).



tions for the land amounted to \$90.50. As will be seen, the summer was a hard one, particularly on the poor, both because of the yellow fever epidemic and the stagnation of business that accompanied it.

On May 1, 1798, the pastor sent the Bishop a résumé of the state of the Boston church, from April 1, 1797, to April 1, 1798, as well as of the Easter communions of 1798. At Boston itself there had been 57 baptisms, of which 7 were for adults: in other places there had been 30 infants and 1 adult baptized; and among the Indians there were 13 infant baptisms. Marriages and deaths, which are given for Boston only, numbered 17 and 14 respectively. Easter communions amounted to 210 at Boston, 15 at Plymouth, 21 at Newburyport, and 3 at Salem.<sup>38</sup>

At the same time Father Matignon wrote to the Bishop:

We are still reduced here to impotent wishes for a church building, although ours is too small: the means of our faithful not corresponding to their number, which amounts altogether to no more than 6 or 7 hundred. The property where you once visited the two poor Jackson and Maloney families, and which belongs to the heirs of Governor Hancock, has just been sold for \$5,000. This is considered very cheap, altho' the house was torn down some time ago. However, it would be impossible for us to put together even half this amount.

Meanwhile, the pastor had been living at Mrs. Lobb's house. Whether Father Cheverus went there also, after his first days at the Hancock House, is not known. It is certain, however, that a short time after the new curate's arrival, the pastor (out of his own personal money) hired a house two doors from the church on School Street, and upon the occasion of the curate's second visit to Maine, the pastor was busy fixing up the new house for their more commodious occupation.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, May 1, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 9). In the previous year, Easter, 1796, to Easter, 1797, Boston had had 54 baptisms, of which 7 were of adults; 13 marriages, 10 deaths (*Church Register*).

<sup>39</sup> Fragment of a letter of Thomas Walley, cited in *The Cathedral*, Nov. 24, 1871.

On May 29, 1798, the curate wrote from Maine to the pastor on this matter:

You are too delicate in what you ask of others. I beg of you the favor of acting more freely with me. I know your sentiments and I never have the slightest doubt that what you do is dictated by the purest and liveliest friendship.

As far as our lodging goes, do what you can. All I can say to you and assure you is that I find everything [you do] well done. A small hole even without a chimney would suffice me. [If?] I should have a stove like Father Thayer . . . (a stove is no use in wigwams!!), I believe that we would soon be tired of it; not to speak of when the weather was fine, but when it is cold or damp like today, one must either freeze or be suffocated with smoke. . . .<sup>40</sup>

Father Matignon also busied himself in these days in continuing that work of soliciting priests from Europe which had already brought Father Cheverus to America. He especially sought someone to replace the latter on the Indian mission: and in this he had the efficacious help of Father Cheverus himself. They were finally successful in obtaining a fellow townsman of Father Cheverus', the Rev. James René Romagné, of whom much will be said hereafter.

He was preceded by another townsman of Father Cheverus'. This was the Rev. John Ambrose Sougé.<sup>41</sup> Whether the latter's coming was directly due to Father Cheverus is unknown, but it could hardly have been entirely uninfluenced by him, for the two priests had been together in Laval and in England. Unlike Father Cheverus, Father Sougé did not intend to serve the mission directly. He came to America to be "chaplain in the

<sup>40</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, May 29, 1798. The passage reflects the pastor's busying himself about his curate's welfare: and there is a great probability that it refers to Father Matignon's hiring a house in School Street, only two doors from the church.

<sup>41</sup> Jean Ambroise Sougé was born in Mayenne, on May 14, 1760, ordained a priest in 1783, and became Canon of the Bishop of Dol on the resignation of his cousin, Rev. Michael Thoumin. With these two, and many others, he went into exile to England. He taught at Wallingford (A. Angot, *Dictionnaire . . . de la Mayenne*, III, 722). Father Sougé received his doctorate in Theology at the University of Angers, in 1784 (*Bibliothèque d'Angers*, ms. 919).

family of the Vicomte de Sibert Fornillon [read Cornillon] which family is settled near Hartford in Connecticut. . . .” Of him Bishop Douglas wrote to Bishop Carroll: “He is a gentleman strongly recommended to me for his learning, piety, and zeal, and he is intimately connected with Monsieur Cheverus whom I recommended to your Lordship last Autumn.”<sup>42</sup>

Father Sougé himself wrote to Bishop Carroll from New York, on April 4, 1797, and immediately took up his residence in Connecticut, at East Windsor, near Hartford.

He probably drew some Catholics from those parts to the Viscount’s house for Mass, and perhaps for instruction. Naturally, he put himself into correspondence with Fathers Cheverus and Matignon, and perhaps visited them in Boston. After a year the Boston pastor wrote to Bishop Carroll about him:

Mr. Sougé, who has resided this past year in Connecticut, has presumably written you these last days to offer his services in the mission. . . . As Canon and Theologian of Dol, Mr. Sougé did much good by preaching and even more by spiritual direction; and has always enjoyed a reputation for virtue. I do not know how much English he knows, but he has enough to have given instruction, when he was in England, to a little congregation to which the Bishop of the Middle District assigned him: An excessively modest disposition has rendered him perhaps somewhat lacking in self-confidence.<sup>43</sup>

It happened just at the moment that some Acadians of St. Mary’s Bay and Cape Sable, Nova Scotia, applied to Father Matignon for a priest, whom they were in condition to support, being about twelve hundred in number. As Father Jones, Vicar-General of the Nova Scotia missions, with the agreement of the English Government, authorized Father Matignon to send them one, the latter thought of offering the post to Mr. Sougé, always provided that Bishop Carroll approved.<sup>44</sup> He wrote to Father Cheverus about the matter, but the latter re-

<sup>42</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VII (1890), 159 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 3 E 2).

<sup>43</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, May 1 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 9).

<sup>44</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 23, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 10).

plied, suggesting that Father Sougé's knowledge of English would fit him for a place in the United States.<sup>45</sup> Finally Father Sougé was assigned by Bishop Carroll to Newtown, Maryland, in which State he is known to have worked from at least March 5, 1801, to March 29, 1803.<sup>46</sup>

Shortly before Father Sougé left Connecticut, another French priest named Father Tisserant appeared there. He also was a French refugee, a priest of the Diocese of Bourges, who had gone to England in 1792, and came to Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1798. He was in Boston on July 23, 1798, on which date he obtained a missal from Father Matignon and also asked him to get him a portable altar stone.<sup>47</sup> His previous history is not well known: but he was evidently a person of some importance and of influential connections. He appears to have been a tutor in the family of a certain Mr. Bellasis, with whom he visited the United States.<sup>48</sup> Father Tisserant stayed in Connecticut until June, 1805, and made frequent visits to Boston. Afterwards he worked in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, possibly residing with Mr. Morris' family, for a year, and then returned to Europe.

At exactly the same time as Father Tisserant, still another priest appeared at Boston. He was the Rev. Edmund Burke, later the first Bishop of Halifax, Nova Scotia. On May 29, 1798, Father Cheverus wrote to Father Matignon:

<sup>45</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, May 29, 1798 (*ibid.*, 11 A D 3); Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 23, 1798 (*ibid.*, 5 G 10).

<sup>46</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, June 22, 1798 (*ibid.*, 11 A D 5); cf. *ibid.*, 7-T, 1 to 8; see also *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XV (1902), 36, 37. Although Father Sougé did not go to Cape Sable, the mission was not left uncared for. Father Matignon probably wrote about it to Msgr. de Saint-Pol-de-Léon, because on April 15, 1799, the latter wrote to the Bishop of Quebec that he was sending Father Sigogne there (P. Dagnault, *Sud-Ouest de la N. Ecosse* [Valence, 1905], pp. 52-53). Cf. Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis, Jan. 31, 1799 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>47</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July, 1798.

<sup>48</sup> Father Tisserant to Mrs. Seton, Aug., 1806. Father Tisserant had a sister who in 1804 lived with the Countess of Thürheim, sometimes at Vienna and sometimes near Linz. He also had another sister who lived at Münster, and who was in some way connected with the Princess Galitzin. (See Father Tisserant to Bishop Carroll, Sept. 26, 1804.) In 1805 (June 1st) he was described by Father Cheverus as "both learned and pious" and a proper person to advise Mother Seton. See also *Notes in Boston Dioc. Arch. Copies*.



I learned by the *Gentinel* of the arrival of Mr. Burke. Present my respects to him. . . . I admire his zeal and his courage in returning to Cayenne. I am also very glad that you have such good company, although that may occasion some comparisons, not wholly advantageous to me.<sup>49</sup>

Father Burke was seeking a place in this diocese, and Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Carroll about him. The Bishop thereupon proposed some very eligible situations to Father Burke, but the heat of our summers and the fear of the yellow fever apparently dissuaded the latter from accepting any of them. On January 31, 1799, he decided finally to go to Halifax.

Father Cheverus had returned from his long missionary trip to Maine in the middle of August, not only to meet his pastor and Father Burke and to take up his residence in the new priest's house in School Street, but also to find that the yellow fever was occasioning great fear in Boston. The fever had started about July 1st, and because of its unusual mortality occasioned an increasing excitement and alarm in the town. By August 1st, these had so affected the people that during the whole of that month and part of the next "nearly one-third of the inhabitants," it was estimated, "went into the country, and business [was] almost at a standstill."<sup>50</sup>

On August 4, 1798, the selectmen announced that

having had a consultation with the Physicians of the town, [they] found . . . that from the first approach of the fever, [viz., from the first of July] which has proved so mortal as to excite some alarm both in town and country, but sixteen persons have died with that disease and but ten persons are now sick. . . .<sup>51</sup>

Not unnaturally, the selectmen's reports tended to minimize the danger, but facts compelled them to admit an increase during the summer. By October 8th, some one hundred persons had died as a result of the fever; but by that date the danger

<sup>49</sup> Father Cheverus to Father Matignon, May 29, 1798 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 11 A D 3).

<sup>50</sup> Letters of the Spanish Consul at Boston to his brother in New York, ca. Aug. 6-8, and Sept. 10, 1798, in *Stoughton Letter-Book* (*New York Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>51</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Aug. 4, 1798; cf. also *ibid.*, Sept. 1, Oct. 8, Oct. 20, 1798.

was definitely subsiding. In mid-October it could be joyfully asserted that "Health has again returned to bless our town. And the citizens with their families have very generally appeared, to enliven our late gloomy abodes." <sup>52</sup>

The prevalence of the actual sickness and its striking effect on Catholic mortality is shown by the Church's Burial Book. In the period from August 1st to December 31, 1798, that register contains the names of twenty-eight persons, of whom five were infants. The contrast to the corresponding period of 1797, which records the deaths of three adults and no infants, and to that of 1799, which shows two adult deaths and one infant, is unescapable.

In the face of this crisis the Boston priests did the full duty of their priestly office. "Eye witnesses to the condition of things in the city [at that time] bear honorable testimony to the conduct of M. Cheverus and M. Matignon at this trying period." They were "always seen at the post of danger, beside the couch of the sick and dying." <sup>53</sup>

Father Cheverus' first biographer allowed himself an extreme liberty of imagination in the narration of his hero's apostolic devotion on this occasion. Not only did he state, quite incorrectly, that "the ministers of the various other sects fled or, with their families, kept themselves aloof": but he also made not the slightest mention of Father Matignon's presence and self-sacrifice during the same crisis: to say nothing of the probable coöperation of Father Burke, who was also in the town at that time. As a matter of fact, "numbers of the Protestant ministers remained in the city and with [the Catholic clergy] faithfully performed those duties of religion and humanity which belonged to their office; although it is not denied, some few of the clergy, participating in the common alarm, removed out of town." <sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 20, 1798. <sup>53</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 374.

<sup>54</sup> Hamon, *Vie du Cardinal Cheverus*, 1st ed., pp. 76 ff.; Stewart, p. 374. It is just to state that Hamon accepted Stewart's corrections in later editions. A writer in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* of Jan. 30, 1839, had already sharply criticized the false statements about the Protestant clergy. "Bishop Cheverus himself," he declared, "would be the first to rebuke his friend for his absurd fancies."

All exaggerations apart, when the town resumed its normal life the Catholics of Boston, with their clergy, found themselves already far removed from the odium and persecution and the shame and divisions of their previous history. They were an organized unit, under the saintly guidance of priests who had gained the respect, and to a large extent even the admiration, of their fellow citizens.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEW CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS (1799-1803)

#### I

ON JANUARY 31, 1799, when Fathers Matignon and Cheverus were again alone to continue their ordinary ministry in a far more sympathetic Boston than ever before, and were probably hoping to resume their project of a new church, they were again seriously upset. A letter received that day from Bishop Carroll brought them word that he was minded to appoint Father Cheverus to Philadelphia. The pastor was very much grieved at the idea of the separation. Father Cheverus, on his side, confessed to the Bishop: "I shall leave him with the greatest regret; but, however, if you think that I shall be useful either in Philadelphia or anywhere else more than in Boston, I shall always be ready and willing to go wherever you please."

Happily, the Bishop's plan was not carried out; the two priests were left alone to enjoy their deepening friendship and to pursue their splendid work. Father Cheverus was to help Father Matignon in Boston and was also to have charge of the English-speaking Catholics in the district of Maine.

The great majority of the Boston congregation were now Irish, the French having mostly departed from Boston. In 1797, for example, out of sixty-nine baptisms in the register, only thirteen were French; and in 1798, out of one hundred and fourteen baptisms in the register, only eleven were French. Among the old-time French one recognizes only the names Gallet, Bertody, Francoeur, and Guedron. With the exception of Gallet, French names are almost completely absent from the list of contributors to the church expenses. Not unnaturally, therefore, no French name is found among the three wardens.

Shortly afterwards the little congregation at Newburyport suffered a great diminution by the departure of four or five



French families of whom Father Cheverus had made fervent Christians.<sup>1</sup>

On March 31, 1799, which was the Sunday after Easter, a full meeting of the congregation was called to consider the matter of raising money to purchase a convenient piece of ground, "calculated for the purpose of erecting a church." The words of the actual minutes run thus: "that which we now occupy being only a hired place, already too small for our present number, and the lease of it being soon to expire." The meeting resolved that a subscription be opened on the following Sunday, and that a committee be appointed who would supervise the subscriptions, "together with our Reverend Pastors, to whom the right of sitting, voting, and presiding, if they wish, belongs from their office." The committee elected was composed of "his honour, Don Juan Stoughton, Consul of his Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain, and the three wardens then in office, Messrs. John Magner, Patrick Campbell, and Michael Burns, to whom were added Messrs. Edmund Connor, John Duggan, and Owen Callaghan."

On the next Sunday, April 7th, those proceedings and elections were ratified by the congregation. It was also voted that "before the subscription begins and moneys are received, a treasurer out of the Committee be appointed and that the Reverend D. Matignon be desired to undertake this office, together with his Reverend Colleague Mr. John Cheverus."

Prudent and practical resolutions were then voted for the collection and care of the subscriptions and a form of appeal drawn up. It read:

We the Subscribers feeling the necessity and earnestly desiring to procure as soon as possible the erection of a Church or place of Worship, belonging to us, where we, our children, relations, friends and all persons professing our holy Religion may have the inestimable happiness of worshipping God, hearing his word, and enjoying all the benefits of the free and public exercise of our Religion, to which we have a right by the free constitution of this State, and of the Federal government,

<sup>1</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, May 2, 1799 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 G 11).

promise and pledge ourselves punctually to pay for the purpose of purchasing a lot of ground for the erection of said Church the Sums respectively affixed to our names: to wit, half of said Sum either at the time of the subscription, or within ninety days from it, and the other half, within six months from the said subscription.

The moneys paid on the first day amounted to \$788: and the whole amount pledged, to \$2096. The Spanish Consul headed the list, with a subscription of \$200 on his own account, Kavanagh and Cottrill came next with \$500 (and offered \$500 besides toward the building of the church); John Magner followed with \$333.33. The other members of the committee pledged each \$100; Mrs. Lobb, Mrs. Doyle, and Mrs. James Welsh also pledged each \$100; John Downy pledged \$60; James Wall, Joseph Costello, John Ward, John Driscoll, David Fitzgerald, William Daly, \$50 apiece. There were some donations of \$40 and \$20, but most were of \$10. Father Ciquart, the French Indian missionary in New Brunswick, sent \$73 to the fund; the Viscount de Grenier, \$20; Philip Dumont, Robert Query, Augustin Gallet, and a few other French were also represented. The item, "*Abraham Fitton \$20.00*," attracts attention, as does another, "*The two pastors, \$73.16*." One of the most touching entries on the list is the sum of \$3.50 received from the four altar boys: Maurice Torpey, Michael White, and John Cox, who gave \$1, and little Jimmie Cox, \$.50.<sup>2</sup>

On the first of May, a meeting of the committee was held in the house of Hon. Don Juan Stoughton, and "it appeared that the whole of the moneys subscribed . . . amounted to \$3202.42; out of which \$1019.92 were already paid. . . ."

The committee was of the opinion that it was not proper to make any offers towards the purchase of any land till the whole of the subscribed money mentioned above was paid: the moneys already received were therefore employed in the purchase of three notes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and ten shares of a United States loan, the first bearing five and the latter ten per cent interest.

<sup>2</sup> *Book of Accounts*, p. 78 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

On May 2, 1799, Father Matignon informed the Bishop of these results and explained:

This sum will probably just about cover the cost of the land: indeed we shall be happy if we can obtain a lot large enough and conveniently situated. For there is hardly a corner here, not built on, except in those parts far removed from the centre, which would be very inconvenient.

As for the actual construction (which according to recent laws must be brick), I have absolutely no idea how we shall finance it, the present effort having almost exhausted the abilities of the faithful here. We are hoping for some help from the [other] inhabitants of the city: but since the death of Mr. Russel, we have no one, anyway remarkable for his generosity to us; and this aid will hardly amount to much. Our Governor, Mr. Sumner, is very ill — no hope is held out for his recovery. That is another loss for us: he was universally respected and rich; his name at the head of a subscription list for us would have had a great influential effect. The Lt. Governor who will succeed him until May is rather small and without ability.

Our consul [Spanish] believes that he will be able to obtain a thousand dollars from the King of Spain on the credit of his family, if communication becomes freer. . . .

Father Matignon then addressed a moving appeal to the Bishop, whom he addressed as "Father of all your flock, [who] have on many occasions shown the tenderest interest in your poor faithful Catholics of Boston . . . and [who] are convinced, more than anybody else, of the great importance of the success of our undertaking." The pastor then explained his own idea that

Without a church here, perhaps in a few years there will be no congregation either, and the hope of any extension of the faith in the rest of the state will go up in smoke. On the other hand, if we had a fitting and sufficiently large edifice, while we have Father Cheverus with us, there is room for hope that God will bless his indefatigable labor by conversions more numerous and more important than the few which have been made hitherto.

He ended by requesting the Bishop to approve an appeal for funds in Havana, where his friend Father Du Bourg might help the cause.

Throughout the summer and into the autumn, Sunday by Sunday and then day by day, the eager pastor in Boston could put down in his account book the receipt of the ten dollars, and the five dollars, and the threes, the twos, and the ones. Pledges were fulfilled, new ones came in. And on the 28th of October of that same year, at a meeting of the whole congregation specially called to hear the report of the committee, Father Matignon, in the name of the same committee, made the long-expected announcement. He said:

After several inquiries and the matter having been fully examined by them, no spot appeared more eligible for the erection of a Church, out of the few ones that had been offered for sale since their appointment for that purpose, than one lying at the end of Franklin Square; that it appeared to unite cleanliness, decent neighborhood, together with a central and airy situation, was remote from noise especially upon Sundays; that it was offered to us for the moderate price of 2500 Dols., while as much as 10,000 had been asked for other grounds not much preferable; that the owners who are proprietors of the Boston Theatre were very willing to let us have it at the above price, tho' the price they had expected till now was \$4,000, and that it was reported, and even certainly known to some of the Committee, that they might have a higher price than what they ask, did they consent to have a tavern or other public house erected on it; that, therefore, it is their opinion it ought to be purchased, after the usual inquiries concerning the validity of the purchase, the form of it, upon which subject it is their intention to have the advice of some of the most reputable lawyers in the town.

The congregation expressed their full approbation of the purchase proposed, desired the committee to proceed to the bargain, and voted the thanks of the society to the committee.

When Christmas came, it must have been a grand present for the little flock in Boston to hear the announcement at High



Mass that the land had been purchased and the deed was passed "under the names of the Right Rev. Dr. Carroll, our Bishop residing in Baltimore, and of the Reverend Francis Antony Matignon, our present pastor and naturalized citizen of America."<sup>3</sup> The deed was dated the 24th of December, 1799.

Of course, the pastor wrote the joyful news to Bishop Carroll, telling him also of the church's determination to pursue the work. In the Bishop's congratulatory reply, he aroused Boston Catholics' hopes that he would visit them to lay the cornerstone. Father Matignon, therefore, was doubly pleased to write to Bishop Carroll that on the evening of St. Patrick's day "a number of our Catholic people began to dig the ground, and they have continued since then with ardor (and without pay) so that the foundations can begin to be laid in a week from now."

The church was to be built according to a plan drawn up by the most famous architect of the town, Charles Bulfinch, to whom Boston owed the State House and other elegant buildings. He was also one of the shareholders of the Boston Theatre Company. His plan called for an edifice fifty-eight feet wide, and eighty-one feet long, with provisions for an added thirty-three feet in the length, when the congregation would be able and compelled to enlarge it.

All the actual cash left in Father Matignon's possession was \$600. Nevertheless

[the intrepid pastor informed the Bishop], we are determined to begin, counting on Divine Providence for the means to continue. . . . We anticipate with joy the time which will be convenient for you, if you will, to honor us with a visit. Furthermore, your visit will procure great spiritual consolations to a large part of the flock, which has long been preparing for confirmation, and to the pastors themselves.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Recorded July 3, 1800, *Suffolk Deeds*, book 108, p. 56. Father Matignon's lawyers were James Sullivan and Rufus Emery. The lot measured 70 × 100 feet. The wisdom of the purchase was quickly shown, by an offer of \$3000, made to the committee, to sell the property, March 11, 1800.

<sup>4</sup> March 19, 1800 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 2). See *Account Book* under date May 31, 1800, page 93: Martin Murphy, Thomas Winter, Patrick Fennessy, Martin Fleming, Daniel Shaw, Thomas Moran, "who worked *this week and the preceding one*, in digging a deep trench in ye water and mud up to yr. knees."

In early March, Father Matignon had solicited the newly elected Coadjutor Bishop of Quebec, Monsignor Plessis, for aid in erecting the Boston church. With his saintly earnestness he pleaded the cause of a church in Boston as of the utmost importance for the support of religion here and for its progress in the environs. . . . "As my confrère and myself rarely have Mass stipends to acquit, we would apply to this meritorious work whatever of these you could obtain for us." <sup>5</sup>

On April 21st the excavating was sufficiently advanced to allow the start of the foundation. Father Matignon was still anxiously awaiting Bishop Carroll's reply about laying the first stone. Besides his personal joy at greeting the Bishop here, he intended to open a subscription among the non-Catholics of Boston, and thought that Bishop Carroll's presence would also be of particular consequence in this regard.<sup>6</sup> But the Bishop was unable to come and the foundations were begun without him. The cornerstone was laid in the presence of the Spanish Consul. However, while the building went very well, the collections went very badly. Kavanagh and Cottrill paid \$250; James Smithwick (Mrs. Lobb's son) paid \$200; John Magner gave \$200, and Edmund Connor gave \$50. Besides these, the other donations were both few in number and exceedingly small, making up a total of hardly \$250, of which last sum nearly \$100 came from outside Boston. On August 28, 1800, a subscription had been started among "the inhabitants of the town of Boston and other gentlemen." It was headed by the name of "The President of the United States, \$100," but for nearly a year it remained without the addition of any other name or donation. Nothing came from Canada.

By October 14th the walls had been raised three feet above the ground. However, the expenses already amounted to \$1965.64, and exceeded the pastor's ability to pay. In face, therefore, of a deficit of \$469.76, Father Matignon stopped the work. He even feared that he would not be able to continue it

<sup>5</sup> March 11, 1800 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>6</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, April 21, 1800 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 N 2).

the next summer. This would involve, so he informed the Bishop, enough money to raise the walls completely and cover the building before winter set in. "Our Catholics are exhausted: a subscription started in the city, altho' it had at the head the name of the President of the United States with one hundred dollars, had hardly brought in anything and will probably produce but little."<sup>7</sup>

The minutes of the next meeting of the Church Building Committee read almost like a swan-song:

October the 19th, 1800, in a full meeting of the whole Congregation, the thanks of the whole Society were voted and desired to be offered to Mr. James Bulfinch, Esq. for his kindness to the Congregation in having supplied us with a very elegant plan for our new Church, and such as united decency and ornament with economy and having shown himself a friend and a Patron to us; Likewise to Mr. Haskett Derby, Esq., for his liberal present of a bell, and to the Most Respected and beloved President of the United States John Adams, for his encouragement to our undertaking and Patronage, and the polite expressions with which he accompanied his gift of one hundred dollars towards our building: Resolved likewise that his name shall be placed at the head of all other benefactors of our church in Boston.<sup>8</sup>

The work on the church building was not resumed until March 23, 1802, although a fruitless attempt was made in August, 1801. The reason for the delay was always lack of money: but this was not wholly unconnected with a renewal of Protestant opposition to Catholics.

## II

In 1799, Father Cheverus began his annual trip to Maine in late July. He made his headquarters with the Kavanagh family at Newcastle, where he said Mass for the five Sundays, beginning July 28th. On weekdays he made the rounds to the dif-

<sup>7</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Oct. 14, 1800 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 3). *Account Book*, p. 153 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>8</sup> *Account Book*, *loc. cit.*

ferent places where he knew or heard that there were Catholics. The baptism records show that he visited Kennebec, Waldoboro, Bristol, Pownalboro, and Maduncook. Altogether he had been in contact with a dozen Catholic families with their forty children. He was back in Boston by September 3rd.

Partly as a result of Father Cheverus' visit to Maine that year, the question of Catholics' exemption from ministerial taxes was brought before the courts. It had been raised by Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill two years previously, when the town of Newcastle first had Mr. Kiah Bayley as settled minister, and when Father Cheverus was expected to make his first visit. In that year (1797), according to the testimony of John Farley, treasurer of the town,

the selectmen of said Newcastle gave an order on me to the collectors of said town, discharging said Kavanagh from paying any ministerial rate for that year, and . . . the town of Newcastle aforesaid would not admit said order. . . . In the year 1798, I received from the collector of said Newcastle the sum of sixteen dollars and some cents, it being ministerial rate collected from James Kavanagh . . . and in the year 1799 [I] received the like sum as above, which the said James Kavanagh did request me to pay to the Reverend Doct'r A. Matignon of Boston his the said Ministerial Taxes.

The collector of taxes for 1798 deposed that he had received from J. Kavanagh \$16.02, assessed him for minister's tax, the receipt for which bore the words "which sum I engage will be immediately paid to John Farley, Treasurer of said Newcastle, so as he the said James Kavanagh's Minister or any other person entitled to the same may receive the same."

Benjamin Lincoln, collector for 1799, deposed that he had called on Mr. Kavanagh for his taxes (the receipt is dated October 5, 1799),

and after paying his Ministers Tax, Mr. Kavanagh and Cotterill being together, Mr. Cotterill said they had got a writ and would sue the town for said money and was determined to drive it as far as the Law would carry it, and if we cannot



get clear as Roman Catholics, then we will turn Baptists, then we will certainly get clear.<sup>9</sup>

On November 1, 1799, a writ was issued at Boston in the name of Father Matignon against the inhabitants of the town of Newcastle, for the recovery of the sum of eighty dollars which they had "received to the use of the said Plaintiff" and which they had "promised the Plaintiff to pay . . . on demand. Yet, although requested, [they] have not paid [it] but refuse and neglect so to do." Suit was brought for one hundred dollars and "other due damages."<sup>10</sup> Father Matignon later declared to Bishop Carroll that he was strongly opposed to the suit which despite his objections had been entered in his name by Attorney-General James Sullivan, who promised Kavanagh and Cottrill "an almost infallible success."<sup>11</sup>

The suit came to trial at the session of a Court of Common Pleas, held at Boston on January 7, 1800 (John Lowell, Jr., represented the town of Newcastle, James Sullivan represented the Catholics). The town's position was that it had not been proved liable; the Court decided in the town's favor, and assessed the costs against Father Matignon. On February 18th, an appeal against that decision was lodged by Father Matignon's attorney, who opposed the priest's desire to accommodate the affair with the words, "You must not, you cannot." The appeal was continued, and finally came to trial on March 5, 1801, before Supreme Court Justices Bradbury, Paine, Dawes, and Sewall. The Court was unanimous against Father Matignon's claim and assessed him costs of \$49.25.

Both he and Father Cheverus were at the trial and listened "with raptures," as the latter put it, to the Judges' decision.

The Constitution [said the Judges] obliges everyone to contribute for the support of Protestant Ministers and them alone. Papists are only tolerated and as long as their Ministers behave

<sup>9</sup> *Arch. Supreme Judicial Court, Records, 1800-1802*, pp. 125 ff.; see also *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XIX (1902), 122 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Arch. Supreme Judicial Court*.

<sup>11</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, March 16, 1801 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

well, we shall not disturb them. But let them expect no more than that.

Father Cheverus also made mention of "many other equally flattering speeches."<sup>12</sup>

What was important in all this was the Court's opinion, that according to the Constitution of Massachusetts every Catholic (outside the town of Boston) was obliged to pay a tax for the Protestant cult and its minister, even if he actually contributed to the support of a Catholic church and priest. Although the text of the Court's decision is not available, it may still be known from a later court's citations, in a similar case, where Universalists were involved.<sup>13</sup> "In the case of Matignon vs. The Inhabitants of Newcastle," the later court declared, "it was determined that the teacher mentioned in the latter part of the fourth paragraph so far referred to the first paragraph as that he must be a Protestant teacher."<sup>14</sup>

That this was one basis of the Court's decision is confirmed by Father Matignon himself, who wrote to Bishop Carroll: "The principle advanced and sustained by the judges [in his case] is that, in view of the preliminary article, one must everywhere understand the word Protestant before that of Minister."<sup>15</sup>

Father Matignon's criticism of this mode of interpreting the Constitution included several observations.

First [he remarked, that] not only individuals but even an entire Catholic community, such as could easily be established in the as yet unsettled lands of the state, could thereby be forced by law to provide itself with a Protestant minister: which is absurd and an injury to liberty of conscience. Secondly, that the Constitution itself had provided against this injustice by adding the two restrictions, first, that "the several towns, etc., shall have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers," without adding the word Protestant; and second-

<sup>12</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 10, 1801 (*ibid.*, 2 N 3).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Mass. Reports*, 6:401, Supreme Judicial Court, May term, 1810, *Thos. Barnes vs. Inhabitants of Falmouth*.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 413.

<sup>15</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, March 19, 1801.

ly, that even individuals should have the right of having their share of "the monies, paid to the support of the [Protestant] public worship and public teachers aforesaid, uniformly applied to the public teacher or teachers of *his own religious sect or denomination*." No one is excluded.

Father Matignon logically deduced that the Court's interpretation was itself a denial of the Constitution by subordinating Catholics to other sects, as prohibited by the last paragraph of the third article.

In 1810, in the Barnes case, the Court stated:

In our opinion, this paragraph has no relation to the subject before us. Its object was to prevent any hierarchy or ecclesiastical jurisdiction of one sect of christians over any other sect; and the sect of Roman Catholics are as fully entitled to the benefit of this clause as any society of protestant christians. It was also intended to prevent any religious test, as a qualification for office. Therefore, those Catholics who renounce all obedience and subjection to the Pope, as a foreign prince or prelate, may, notwithstanding their religious tenets, hold any civil office, although the constitution has not provided for the support of any public teacher of the popish religion.<sup>16</sup>

That 1810 decision, based on the Court's action in this New-castle case, cost the Federalist Party the control of the State in later days.

Father Matignon added to his previous observations other extended and all-embracing remarks. He noted that, even if the Constitution was doubtful on the point at issue, other factors should have turned the decision in favor of the Catholics.

Equity itself, the liberality so vaunted at the present time, the example of the Catholics of Maryland [in the past], the happy effects of the practice of our religion, generally acknowledged by all the inhabitants of Boston, at least in relation to the Irish, the maxim *Odia restringenda, favores ampliandae*; all of these should have thrown the decision to the side favorable to Catholics.

<sup>16</sup> *Mass. Reports*, 6:416.

He wished that his attorney had emphasized these points, "which would have been an easy matter. It would have been still easier for him to refute the calumnies of the opposing attorney. . . ."

But Attorney-General Sullivan had done none of these things. He limited himself to reasons "so weak, so feeble, so miserable, so foreign to the matter in hand, that it was not difficult for the presiding Judge Bradbury, who even before the start of the pleading clearly declared himself against the Catholics, to draw the other judges over to that view."

Father Matignon was wholly dissatisfied with Sullivan. He declared that the latter

had refused the help of a second attorney, that in his own plea he said that he did not intend to defend Catholic principles, and that he had even communicated to us in advance his doubts on the Constitution; that, in fine, he had argued his case exactly as I would have desired him to do, if I were the adverse party.

We believed that the only question would be whether Kavanagh, living some two hundred miles from here, could still be regarded as a member of our Church, and on this point we would have been victorious. They made it a general question of law, on which Mr. Sullivan was evidently but little prepared. Thus we are forever deprived of a right, which in a number of places, no one even thought of denying us.<sup>17</sup>

Besides the ministerial tax case, another court case involving Catholics had also been going on at the same time. Like the first, it, too, was occasioned by events in the District of Maine. There is even some probability that it was begun as a result of the Catholics' bringing up that first case.

Father Cheverus was accused of having unlawfully performed a marriage at Newcastle. The ceremony in question was that of James Smithwick and Elizabeth Jackson, and had been celebrated on New Year's Day, 1800, by Father Cheverus in the

<sup>17</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, March 16, 1801 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 4).



presence of Andrew Jackson, the bride's father, of Mrs. Kavanagh, the bride's sister, and of Mr. Kavanagh and Mr. Cottrill. Father Cheverus had left Boston immediately after Christmas, 1799, and, as this was not his customary time for the Maine mission, it may be deduced that he went there on this occasion primarily to perform the ceremony.

He stayed, however, during the whole month of January, and visited the country roundabout. For example, on January 5th, he was at Waldoboro; on the 14th at Cushing; on the 15th at Warren; and on the 25th at Waldoboro again. As a result three new Irish families (Roche, O'Brien, and Maguire) were added to his congregation. On his return to Boston, he visited Portsmouth on February 14th, and probably Newburyport and Salem.

When Father Cheverus went again to Newcastle in the summer, as was his wont, he found that both a criminal and a civil action against him were pending there, for having performed a marriage, in the County of Lincoln, "having no lawful authority therefor."

On the 15th of July, 1800, Attorney-General Sullivan, evidently on complaints from the town authorities, had the matter brought before the grand jury at Wiscasset, which promptly returned the desired indictment.

Four days later, on July 19th, a warrant for Father Cheverus' arrest was issued by Justice Bowman. On the 22nd, Father Cheverus was brought before a justice of the peace named Shearjashub Bourne, who recognized him to appear and answer on two hundred dollars' bail, furnished by Matthew Cottrill. The trial was set for the September session.

Meanwhile, Kavanagh had fitted up at his own expense a small neat chapel out of what had previously been a store, and Father Cheverus officiated in it during his stay at Newcastle.

The Massachusetts law on marriage declared that no one was authorized to marry unless he was a minister or a justice of the peace residing in the county, but that if the parties had in their place of residence no minister of their persuasion, they could have one come in from the next county. Even if Father

Cheverus could not be legally regarded as resident in Lincoln County, he was a minister in the nearest county where there was a Catholic priest. Nevertheless, to obviate any legal difficulty, the parties had gone before a justice of the peace on January 2nd, the day after their marriage, to have the marriage repeated or legally ratified. This was in conformity with the Catholic practice in England and other places. Father Matignon, who hired a member of Congress, named Lee, to defend Father Cheverus, supplied him with certain documents to help in the trial. One of these was a copy of the printed instructions issued by the English Catholic bishops for the use of their priests. It was published in London and known there, and although it ordered the very practice which Father Cheverus had followed, no known prosecution had ever been made in England on its account. Father Matignon also furnished the lawyer with Bishop Carroll's Pastoral Letter of November 10, 1791, on the subject of marriages, by which it was shown that Catholics were prohibited from being married by any other than their lawful pastors.

The Attorney-General brought two actions against Father Cheverus: one criminal, the other civil. The criminal action was the one first tried. Punishment for a person found guilty on this charge was the pillory and a fine at discretion. Father Cheverus later declared that he was tried "in October at Wiscasset in the Company of and at the same bar with thieves, men guilty of forgery, etc., etc." Of the three judges — Bradbury, Strong (brother of the Governor), and Sewall — only the last-named spoke in his favor, the two others would willingly have sent him to the pillory. Two lawyers spoke for Father Cheverus (one a member of Congress, the other a member of the Legislature). What they said about the Catholic law on marriage in the United States and in England had little, if any, effect on the judges. Judge Bradbury, who presided, told Father Cheverus in open court that if it had not been proven that he was a settled minister at Boston, he would have been sentenced to an hour on the pillory and to the payment of eighty pounds fine, but that, as he was recognized to be a settled minister,

only a civil action would lie against him. The affair, as to the criminal charge, ended there.<sup>18</sup>

The civil action against Father Cheverus was to have come up in June, 1801, and there was every probability that it would go against the priest. At the criminal trial, Judge Bradbury had stated on the bench that "even tho' the parties had later presented themselves to the justice of the peace, if the sacramental words indicate the intention of uniting them in marriage, Mr. Cheverus should be condemned to the fine." That same judge was due to preside again at the civil <sup>19</sup> trial.

However, a series of coincidences, which Father Matignon called the action of Divine Providence, resulted in a practical victory for the priest. Judge Bradbury did not appear at the trial, because he had had a fall from his horse which nearly cost him his life. The Attorney-General Sullivan was also unable to be present. And it happened that his assistant was Father Cheverus' own lawyer. As a result, the case was not even called for trial at that session and could be considered finished.

After the start of the first action, Father Cheverus had neither married nor baptized; and even after the second action, Father Matignon considered it imprudent for him to perform any marriage outside Boston until after the parties concerned had presented themselves to a justice of the peace.<sup>20</sup> As for himself, the intrepid pastor declared to Bishop Carroll, on March 19, 1801, that, according to the recent court decision, his own right to marry might be challenged. "But I do not believe [he wrote] that anyone will dare to prosecute me on this matter. I shall continue to act as I did hitherto."<sup>21</sup>

Partly as a result of the two cases of ministerial tax and right to marry, Father Cheverus made a written agreement with the Catholic residents of Newcastle, in the autumn of 1800, by which they recognized him as their pastor, and he, on his side, promised to fulfill the priestly functions for them. In doing

<sup>18</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Oct. 14, 1800; Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 10, 1801 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 3, and 2 N 3).

<sup>19</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Oct. 14, 1800 (*loc. cit.*).

<sup>20</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 3, 1801 (*ibid.*, 5 H 6).

<sup>21</sup> March 19, 1801 (*ibid.*).

this, without the previous knowledge of the Bishop, he was careful to stipulate "subject to the Bishop's approval and confirmation." He also immediately asked Father Matignon to inform the Bishop about it and the reasons for his having done it.<sup>22</sup> He returned to Boston only at the end of January, 1802.

### III

The building of a Catholic church in the old centre of Puritanism, the legal suit by some Catholics and their priest for the exemption from the congregational ministerial tax, and the prejudiced attitude of the Supreme Judicial Court, manifested in both that case and the Cheverus marriage case, were signs of Catholic growth and of the inevitable opposition to that growth. Another factor in this situation was connected with the intense political bitterness of the years 1798-1801 between Federalists and their democratic opponents, particularly on the issues of French-American relations, and immigration. Early in 1799, Father Matignon, when writing to Father Jones, of Nova Scotia, touched upon the matter briefly but definitely:

France [he declared] has irretrievably lost her influence in this country, in spite of the Jacobin faction, which daily loses ground; and whatever may be the fate of Europe, this country is resolved to maintain her independence against every foreign power, and should a war be the consequence, they are not afraid of it, especially having England for ally. I hope to live to see the monstrous atheistical government of France destroyed, to give place to the restoration of Religion and Monarchy.<sup>23</sup>

It would be a cause of surprise if this situation was not accompanied by some outburst of anti-Catholic hostility in the press. Fortunately for Boston's reputation, such exhibitions were rare indeed at that date.

There was one, however, which, like Mr. Belknap's of two

<sup>22</sup> Dec. 8, 1800 (*ibid.*, 5 H 31).

<sup>23</sup> *Quebec Dioc. Arch.* (catalogued as Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis), Jan. 31, 1799.



years previous, should not be passed over in silence. It appeared in two issues (May 14, 17, 1800) of the *Constitutional Telegraph*. Its anonymous author, as if to emphasize the exceptional character of this production, introduced it by the statement that amidst

the many harangues from pulpit and bar against the infidelity and the villany of the French nation, it has been a subject of surprise to many serious people that nothing has been said by our clergy against the papistical, jesuitical doctrines of the ci-devant priests of France, and their strenuous exertions to disseminate their baleful sentiments.

He then proceeded to fill up that gap. Declaring that the sympathy shown in England, by both civil and ecclesiastical leaders, to the persecuted and deported French clergy, whom "they received into their houses and console under their misfortunes," had brought about an increase of "Popery" in England, he continued by asking:

And have we not evidence to believe that papistical sentiments in some measure, are gaining ground in America? That our clergy feel more candid and cordial to the Roman Church is a fact of public notoriety. They and many leading characters among the Laity speak of His late Holiness as a person eminent for his piety and other Christian virtues, and they have lamented his banishment from Rome and his death as a grievous calamity; and the aristocratical newspapers have played the same tune. In sermons delivered from Protestant pulpits, the revolution in France, as it respects religion, has been deprecated as an awful frown of Providence, and represented in all of the horrors of persecution. And of course the popular characters have been stigmatized as opposing Christ, counteracting his religion, overthrowing his altars, and profaning his temple. Scarcely a Fast or Thanksgiving sermon has been delivered from the pulpit, or midwived from the press, but has been fraught with pathetic exclamations against French infidels for destroying popery. 'They have overthrown the altars of religion' says an officious divine, in his thanksgiving sermon.

That was the author's starting-place for an attack on Catholicity.

The altars of religion!!! [he exclaimed.] Of what religion? Of Christ? Of his apostles? of Protestants? — No. — But of Popery. For no other religion has been banished from France; no other religion was established in that nation. And the clergy of no other religion have been ejected from their livings. Awful, woeful, wicked conduct!! to oppose the pope — to renounce his Holiness — to disbelieve the seven sacraments, and all the trumpery of Antichrist, is evidence of great infidelity and wickedness. . . . By some leaders in our church it has been said, "that Popery, in all its power and influence is a system infinitely better than their present faith." Others have prayed most fervently for the re-establishment of the late spiritual order to their former influence, power, and grandeur. To restore royalty and the priesthood was the intent of the late coalition. And many, in this land, have prayed for its success, toasted Suwarrow and rejoiced at every Austro-Russian victory! Why this joy, these toasts, these prayers? . . . To say that the American clergy wish to introduce the reign of popery into this land of liberty would be censorious. And yet . . .

One of the anonymous author's proofs that America was becoming Catholic was its recent canonization of Washington, on the occasion of whose funeral one reverend orator had declared, "May we not hope for his intercession with Him, who doeth his will in the armies of Heaven?"

In the second article (May 17th), this old-fashioned author undertook to prove again to Boston "that the Pope, with his party, is the MAN OF SIN, THE SON OF PERDITION." Bostonians of the older generation knew the proof by heart. From their youth they had heard all about "the errors, corruptions, and impiety . . . in the Roman Church, in faith, worship and practice — the vicious and impious lives of the Popes — indulgences, saint-worship," and what-not. They must have found it trite.

They would have been more interested in a reply to the article's calumnies against the Catholic Church, which was

prepared by Father Cheverus, but not published at the time. It began with the statement:

A flat denial would be a sufficient answer; the more so, as all those calumnies are now-a-days known to be such by every unprejudiced Protestant. For fear, however, that a simple, or prejudiced people should construe silence into acquiescence under the heavy charges brought against us, I shall address these few words to those who have read the Layman's reflections inserted in the Telegraph.

Let the Layman come forth and tell us in what book, approved by the Catholic Church, he ever read that we look upon the Pope as "the Lord our God"! Did he ever hear any Roman Catholic give him that blasphemous title?

We do not acknowledge in the Pope any temporal powers, and when late events deprived the venerable Pius the 6th of the dominions which he possessed as a temporal Prince, no Catholic thought that his power, as Supreme Bishop of the Catholic Church, had suffered any diminution. His authority is altogether spiritual. . . .

To believe the Pope infallible is no part of our creed, and no Roman Catholic ever pretended that he is impeccable. Should, therefore, his conduct prove unworthy of his eminent station in the Church, we would lament so great a scandal, but yet no ways be staggered in our faith. . . . We thank God, however, that in this corrupted age, and, as it were, "to silence the ignorance of foolish men," such illustrious and unblemished characters have for a long time past filled St. Peter's chair, that people of all Religions have paid an unfeigned homage to their wisdom and virtues. Pius the 6th, in particular, commanded the respect and admiration of his very persecutors. A new Pope has just been elected in spite of the predictions of the Layman, and many other Prophets inspired by the same spirit; and we hope, that as his election has disappointed those "who had seen vain visions," so his irreproachable conduct will silence the enemies of the Catholic Church.

To hear it boldly asserted that Popes and Priests sell licenses to commit sin, must excite an honest indignation in the heart of every one of us. If the Layman has any proofs of the horrid transaction, let him bring them forward; and in case they

should appear satisfactory, let the building of our Church be stopt, let every Roman Catholic be banished from this hospitable land, we are unworthy to live in any civilized country; but should the accusation prove nothing but a gross falsehood, let the calumniator blush, and have done with his slanders.

It has been remarked in this very town, that, since a place of public worship has been opened for the Catholics, and a Priest has resided here, the people of that communion have, in general, led a more exemplary life, than they did before. Strange indeed that, when they had nobody to give them leave to commit sin, they often took it themselves, and since they have a Priest, who encourages them and grants them licenses to commit all kinds of crimes, they are perverse and obstinate enough to refrain from vice and immorality!

The priest's article continued with an outright denial of the Layman's accusations, and wove into it an invitation to visit the Catholic church in Boston, to see, hear, and be convinced. He touched on the comparative history of religious freedom in Congregational Massachusetts, Episcopalian Virginia, and Catholic Maryland, with the apostrophe, "No wonder that the Layman should be so much afraid of Popery spreading far and wide in the land; no wonder he should tremble at the very sight of the stones, which are to be employed in the building of a Papistical church." He touched further on what was at stake in the French Revolution — not Catholicity alone but Religion itself. That was why, he went on,

Whatever may be the opinion of the Layman, [non-Catholic] Ministers consider [the persecuted and murdered priests of France] as worthy members of the Church of God, they acknowledge them as the brave and undaunted champions of the Christian cause; they sincerely sympathize with them, and think it more congenial to the feelings of men, and the charity of true Christians, to shew them friendship and regard, than to abuse them with scurrilous language. May the Layman follow their example and imitate their charity! <sup>24</sup>

The Layman's virulence had probably found its material in an English book, *The Pursuits of Literature*, whose first Amer-

<sup>24</sup> Printed first in *The Jesuit*, I, no. 25, Feb. 20, 1830.



ican edition had just appeared in Boston. This aided the secret jealousy of some ministers, who used it as a means of persuading several persons, previously friendly to Father Matignon, that "although it was proper and generous to tolerate Catholics, one must watch out against their growth."<sup>25</sup> The book itself had been written against England's sympathy and relief for the French refugee priests. Its arguments were designed to show that "the spirit of the system of Popery yet remains unaltered in its great and leading principles . . ." The author's theme lay in the words:

I love toleration in the constitutional sense of the word: but I cannot think it a mark of intolerance, when I deprecate the revival of the Romish superstition in England. . . . I would carry charity with me in my heart and in my hand, but I know that charity . . . must be consistent with a love to my country and to her rights, civil and religious.

[He believed that] . . . the cruelty, the tyranny, the impiety of the Church of Rome have only disappeared, because she has lost the power to exercise them. . . . We pity and give alms to her exiled adherents . . . but let us only advert to the principles . . . upon which we are separated from the idolatrous and intolerant power and it will be evident that as a national church we have neither part nor lot in the matter.

#### IV

Added to all these troublesome affairs for the Catholics of Boston and Maine, there ensued a two-year period of fear that they would lose the services of Father Cheverus.

In early February, 1801, the popular curate received a letter from his father, enclosing another from his former parishioners in Mayenne. This letter told the priest how much they longed for his return, now that Catholic worship was being restored in their neighborhood. Napoleon had demanded from the priests only a simple oath of fidelity to the Constitution, and the head

<sup>25</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Oct. 14, 1800. He referred to Thomas Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature* (1st ed.: London, 1794. 1st Amer. ed.: Philadelphia, 1800). Copy in the *Boston Athenaeum*.

of the diocese of Le Mans had accepted it. By the summer of 1800, many priests were returning to their parishes.<sup>26</sup>

Father Cheverus "bedewed the dear letter of his old parishioners with his tears." In his answer he told them "that since they were still attached to their pastor, [he] did not want to break asunder the sacred and tender ties by which the Church of Jesus Christ had bound [him] to them; . . . but that [his] situation did not permit [him] to leave this country in a sudden manner." He also told them that his decision could not depend finally on theirs; it would have to await word from his ecclesiastical superiors. If, however, he should decide to leave America, he would not do so until the spring of 1802.

He wrote to Bishop Carroll about the matter of his returning to France in a year, and gave a brief summary of conditions in his home diocese, stating that at the time it was under a Vicar Apostolic who would probably succeed to the bishopric and who would also probably order Father Cheverus to return. (The person referred to was Monsignor Dumourier.) The Boston priest then continued: "However, we live in times where less than one year is enough to overturn not only individual projects, but even Empires and Nations. My only wish is to obey the voice of Providence and to go wherever it calls."<sup>27</sup>

To Father Matignon the threatened loss seemed unbearable.

If it takes place [he informed Bishop Carroll], as seems most likely, and if I survive it, it will be irreparable for me. I have so little talent and strength that I don't know how I shall be able to carry on sufficiently here, especially now that our people have gotten accustomed to frequent instructions, etc., etc. And in view of the sparseness of our resources, it will be impossible for me to think of replacing him. Your paternal goodness and the divine Providence will doubtless dictate what is to be done.<sup>28</sup>

There was apparently one ground for hope that his curate

<sup>26</sup> Paul Piolin, *L'Eglise du Mans pendant la Révolution*, III, 364.

<sup>27</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 10, 1801 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 N 3).

<sup>28</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, March 19, 1801 (*ibid.*, 5 H 5).

would not go to France: Father Cheverus' determination not to take the oath of fidelity to the new French Constitution.<sup>29</sup>

As the summer passed, Father Cheverus waited impatiently for news from France. Although he had not changed his mind about refusing the oath of fidelity, he read in the English and French newspapers received in Boston that that oath was not being demanded in the diocese of Le Mans.<sup>30</sup>

At the end of the summer he received a letter from Monsignor Dumourier, giving him correct news about the Church in France, especially that the Concordat had been agreed upon July 15, 1801, although its articles were not yet known in detail. Monsignor Dumourier begged Father Cheverus to return to his parish, and the latter answered that he thought it better to defer his return, although it was not his intention to forsake either his country or his diocese. Neither Monsignor Dumourier's letter nor Father Cheverus' answer to it is extant, but their contents may be gathered from other sources and especially from what Father Cheverus later (on the receipt of new and pressing letters) wrote to one of his friends.<sup>31</sup>

In it he reiterated his affection and esteem for his relatives and former parishioners, but also his own necessity of delaying any departure at least until the autumn. "Nevertheless, if I receive any word which does not allow me to delay, I am ready to go, and the first boat will take me to you." He spoke of the little parish in Maine which he had founded: "Most of my flock are new converts, a large number of them baptized with my own hands. They conjure me not to abandon them." The absolute lack of priests, the poverty of the

<sup>29</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 3, 1801 (*ibid.*, 5 H 6).

<sup>30</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Sept. 10, 1801 (*ibid.*, 5 I 12).

<sup>31</sup> Father Matignon speaks of these new letters thus: "They repeat what was previously written to him, by Mr. Dumourier, the Apostolic administrator, that the latter believes his [Cheverus'] presence absolutely necessary, that Catholic worship is exercised there with the greatest liberty, that all his parishioners, both Catholic and non-Catholic, some time ago signed a second petition (not yet received) asking his immediate return. One of the assistants adds that there is talk of a general resignation of pastors, a reduction in the number of parishes, and the reappointment of those against whom there is not too great opposition on the part of the parishioners. He states that submission has been generally made." Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 23, 1802 (*ibid.*, 5 H 8)

mission, the difficulty of replacing him, the uncertainty still existing about church conditions in his diocese in France — all these valid objections were bravely set out by him whose heart was intent to go back to his homeland. "My heart calls me to you, but the voice of duty and the love of religion seem to prescribe a longer delay."<sup>32</sup>

To Father Matignon, the apparently inevitable loss of his zealous coöperator and devoted friend was more than disheartening. It would, the older priest declared, be irreparable, both for himself and also, he feared, for the flock. It would certainly mean the abandonment of the Eastern mission. Even in Boston, his own lack of strength and health, he told the Bishop, prevented his standing the constant service, without some help during a part of the year. The discouraged pastor opened his heart fully to the Bishop. The absolute necessity of having two priests in Boston and the small resources available to support them were the basis of certain ideas which, Father Matignon told the Bishop, "I wish to submit to you with the candor and docility of a child, consulting his father and director." The first was the possible assignment of Father Thayer to Boston, where his misfortunes in Kentucky were unknown, and where his money would help in the building of the church and a rectory. If the Bishop should think this plan a feasible one, Father Matignon offered to leave to Father Thayer the place of superiority, as to one who was here before him.

The pastor's second suggestion to the Bishop was to put the parish of Boston and the Eastern mission into the hands of the recently founded religious society of the Faith of Jesus, which he himself would, with the Bishop's permission, ask to join.<sup>33</sup> Whatever happened, Father Matignon himself intended to stay in Boston and continue the work.

After Father Cheverus returned to Boston from Maine, he preached the Lent there and made his usual untiring efforts for the good of religion, but still looked anxiously for his letters

<sup>32</sup> Father Cheverus to Bignon, Jan. 18, 1802, printed in *L'Union historique et littéraire du Maine*, I (1893), 346-348.

<sup>33</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 23, 1802 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 8).



from France. The Concordat was promulgated there on April 18, 1802, new bishops were nominated for all the new dioceses, including that of Laval, of which Father Cheverus' parish was henceforth a part, and Monsignor Dumourier became a vicar-general: but no letter from him or the new Bishop came to the Boston priest's hand. Only in March, 1803, did he receive what he had so long anticipated, a quasi-official summons to return. The letter had been sent on June 10, 1802 — indeed, it had been sent in triplicate, but only one copy arrived and that almost a year late.

The letter was apparently a summons. "There is question [it said] of the reëstablishment of Religion in our country, and you are needed. Do not hesitate, I pray you." Father Cheverus, his mind perplexed with doubts and his heart full of troubles and anxieties, at once forwarded the letter to Bishop Carroll, and begged advice and comfort. He told him first of the plea made by his own father, and the invitation of the ecclesiastical Superior.

In consequence of these letters, I had resolved to return to France next May, & was going to write to you upon the subject, but the whole Congregation here have shewn such a grief, & have so strongly represented the case to me that I have promised, if you think I can do it conscientiously, to stay at least 'till next autumn. Even if, in your opinion, the good of Religion requires my presence here, I am very willing to remain in this Mission. I shall beg of the Almighty to give myself & my dear Father the strength to make this sacrifice to him.

Dr. Matignon will give no advice in this case where, he says, his heart feels too interested; he confines himself to pray that I may remain here. . . .<sup>34</sup>

The Spanish Consul, Mr. Magner, and other representatives of the congregation also wrote a letter to Bishop Carroll at the same time. On the very next day the pastor himself added his letter, one of the most significant of his career, and at the same time an impressive evidence of the curate's place in the hearts of Catholic Boston.

<sup>34</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 31, 1803 (*ibid.*, 2 N 4).

Monseigneur [he wrote],

I feel I must add some words to what Father Cheverus and the Congregation wrote you yesterday. You alone, Monseigneur, have the power to retain here, not only for some months more, but for the rest of his life a Missionary, who is adored here, whom it would be impossible to replace, and whose departure would throw me into discouragement and all the faithful into mourning. Your decision will calm his doubts; it will be the voice of Heaven for him, and it will furnish him a legitimate excuse with which to answer all the letters that have been written to him.

You have the less reason to hesitate telling him that both the good of the mission and the views of Providence demand that he remain, at least until you yourself can come here, for the following reasons. He has already handed in his resignation of his parish (in France), which indeed was demanded by the government; and as he came here with an Exeat from his deceased bishop, the bonds which attached him to his parish no longer exist. As for the Vicar-General's letter, written as it is on the same sheet as his father's, and with no express mention of the new bishop's order, nor of his parish, it clearly expresses the *desires of his family* rather than the *real orders of an ecclesiastical superior*.

As for myself, more than a year ago I promised him to make no further opposition to his departure this spring. That prevents my soliciting him to stay, as much as I should like to do. Nevertheless, the more I think about it, the more I am convinced that God evidently destines him for this mission. The strong inclination which he feels to consecrate himself to it, despite the multitude of human motives which unite themselves to call him back to France; his perfect knowledge of the language; talents peculiarly adapted to the mission in this country; his perfect disinterestedness; the tender friendship which unites us as one person and is so useful for doing good together; an infant mission in the East which promises much but will almost infallibly perish unless he continues to cultivate it for many years to come; finally, a series of incidents which, since he landed in America, seem to have been arranged by Providence to keep him here (the details of which are too long for a letter); all this convinces me that this is his vocation.



CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS



CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS *ca.* 1850





But it is for you, Msgr., to show this to him. In doing so, you will answer the desire of all our Catholics here, many of whom actually wept at the very rumor of his leaving. You will give me a new life, and you will do an infinite good to this part of your diocese. . . .<sup>35</sup>

Bishop Carroll had hardly received these letters before he wrote back a masterly answer. Basing his arguments on those furnished him by Father Matignon, he analyzed the case in such a clear and, at the same time, warm and tactful manner, as to convince Father Cheverus,<sup>36</sup> who then wrote to the Bishop, expressing his warmest gratitude for the latter's goodness and his own acceptance of the Bishop's orders. "In your decision I see the decision of divine Providence in regard to me and I humbly submit. Methinks it is Jesus Christ himself who has spoken by the mouth of his venerable Apostle."<sup>37</sup>

So Father Cheverus stayed: and not only for a short time, but for the fifteen years that remained to Father Matignon in life, and after that for still five more.

## V

After the end of the crisis which the two priests went through, they could pursue with renewed vigor the work on the new church, already well on its way to completion. For Father Matignon had not delayed that project to await the final passing of all his difficulties. From January of the preceding year (1802), he had made up his mind on that point. He then reckoned that he would need ten thousand dollars for the indispensable outlay, and probably fifteen thousand dollars for the whole achievement. He also estimated that he could collect about five thousand dollars of that amount during the year. But, to his mind, the church was an absolute necessity, and he determined to proceed.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, April 1, 1803 (*ibid.*, 5 H 9).

<sup>36</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Cheverus, April 20, 1803, in *Boston Monthly Magazine*, May (1825), I, 20.

<sup>37</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, April 29, 1803 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 N 5).

<sup>38</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 23, 1802 (*ibid.*, 5 H 8).

In the middle of Lent he laid the matter before the Church Committee, which resolved to begin on the building as soon as materials could be procured. Jonathan Hunnewell was continued as contractor, with regard to the raising of the brick walls and every other part relative to the mason's business; and Messrs. Wiswall and Hearsey, or the former alone, were to have the undertaking of the roof and every other part of the carpenter work that should be found necessary to secure the building from the injuries of the weather.<sup>39</sup>

One method decided on for raising the necessary funds was an advance sale of the pews, which was put in the hands of a special committee. Another method already inaugurated in the early months of 1801 was a monthly church fund collection, taken up in the church on the second Sunday of each month. This was now emphasized. The average monthly returns were about \$75, although there was a specially large return of \$147 from the August collection. The third method was by appeals to outsiders. These had already been tried in the West Indies, Quebec, and Mexico,<sup>40</sup> without much success. The subscription from the non-Catholics of Boston had also failed.

Father Matignon, therefore, planned as a last resort to make a personal appeal, especially to his friends in Catholic centres south of here. For this purpose he left Boston on April 23, 1802, for a two months' journey through New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Georgetown, Conewago, etc. In Baltimore, Bishop Carroll gave \$30, the Sulpicians gave \$50, the students and faculty of St. Mary's gave \$40, several secular priests gave \$5, \$10, or (in one case) \$20 apiece; the French Vice-Consul and the Spanish Consul gave \$5 apiece. In Conewago Father Brosius gave \$9 and the parish contributed \$56. In Philadelphia the three parishes had collections for the Boston Church: St. Mary's gave \$34, St. Augustine's \$40, and the Holy Trinity German parish \$27; Father Rossiter, pastor of St. Mary's, gave \$10. In Washington the Coadjutor, Bishop Neale,

<sup>39</sup> March 23, 1802 (*Account Book*, p. 154, *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>40</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 14, 1801 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 7).

gave \$10, Daniel Carroll \$20, Charles Carroll \$5, Robert Brent \$10, James Barry \$20. The French Catholics of New Jersey gave \$50. The church in New York gave the largest amount; the collection in the church there amounted to \$107, and gifts from private individuals totaled \$340, including \$50 from Andrew Morris, \$50 from Daniel Lynch, and \$50 from Mme. Longue-mar. Father Tisserant in Connecticut gave \$25. Altogether the net proceeds from this collecting trip by Father Matignon were \$1019.<sup>41</sup>

Pleased as the pastor was, he had expected a more generous response to this appeal. Almost everywhere, however, he found that people had churches to build or other needs of every kind, and that their charity had been cooled and fatigued by a number of previous applications.<sup>42</sup>

In the church's need, Father Matignon thereupon contributed one thousand dollars to the fund out of his own individual fortune. The money with which to do this had probably been made available to him as a result of the settlement of church affairs in France after the Concordat. Thus he became the largest individual contributor to our first Boston church.

Immediately following Father Matignon's return from the South, another significant and profitable source of revenue for the church began to flow in. On August 9, 1802, the first non-Catholic Boston name was added to the subscription list that was started the year before, but had previously netted only President Adams' donation. Nathan Fellows subscribed \$50. That same day, the Messrs. Thomas and James Perkins handed in a subscription sent from Martinique, and followed it up in a month by their own personal subscription of \$100. In October, Stephen Higginson added the prestige of his name and the sum of \$110. By November the non-Catholic subscription was alive. John Parker and Joseph Coolidge gave \$50 apiece; Jonathan Mason gave \$100; Benjamin Bussey gave \$50; Simon Elliot (the general) \$50; Samuel Salisbury, Jr., \$10; John Derby \$50; Rufus Amory and his brother gave \$30; David Sears

<sup>41</sup> *Account Book.*

<sup>42</sup> Father Matignon to Mrs. Stoughton, July 15, 1802 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

\$50; Eben Preble \$50; Theodore Lyman \$100; Samuel Tuckerman \$20; John Prince \$50; Gardiner Greene \$50 — all in November. A little later, in early December, Mr. Higginson gave \$100, as did Samuel Parkman. The solicitations had been made by John Magner and Patrick Cassan, who also reported nearly \$300 in smaller gifts. In the end, before the church was dedicated, that non-Catholic subscription list included about one hundred and forty names. Besides those already mentioned, were others like Dexter, Hunnewell, Otis, Peabody, Quincy, Sturgis, and Weld.

Besides the non-Catholics of Boston, those of Salem also gave to the Catholic church in Boston. In the early days of May, 1803, Father Matignon and the Spanish Consul went to Salem, and called on the Rev. Mr. Bentley, asking his aid in the matter. They had with them a subscription appeal.<sup>43</sup> It met a hearty response in Salem, and gained for the cause, not only the bell from Elias Hasket Derby already mentioned, but also \$389 in cash from such well-known persons as George Crowninshield, William Orne (?), Joseph Peabody, Nathaniel West, Wait and Pierce, William Prescott, William Gray, and Archer, Mason and Babidge. Mr. Bentley, who had done all the introducing, also contributed eight dollars in cash and the following item in his *Diary*:

We ought to do everything which can encourage the liberality in France and Spain, by which the Protestant religion may be more fully tolerated. The Roman and Grecian Pantheons were not wild theories. They were good policy. If they find admittance to the Counting room, they ought to find a Church too. The Crowninshields gave their fifty Dollars in a very polite note to Dr. Matignon. This gentleman, by his long continued good behaviour, gives all the influence of private character to his cause.<sup>44</sup>

The total contributions of non-Catholics to the Boston church were reckoned at \$3453. At the centennial celebration

<sup>43</sup> "Petition" of the Catholics of Boston, May, 1803 (*Arch. of New England Hist.-Gen. Society*).

<sup>44</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, III, 23.



in 1903, Archbishop Williams recalled this non-Catholic support with a gratitude which, he said, would never be forgotten by the Catholics of Boston. It more than made up then, as it often has since then, for the difficulties we have had to go through from another kind of non-Catholic.

For purposes of the record, there must be added that, toward the ending of the subscription, contributions were also received of \$355 from Father Thayer in Kentucky, and of \$4 from the Catholics of New London, Connecticut, through the hands of Father Tisserant.

On the other side of the ledger, at the end of July, 1802, begin the payments for building. Bricks, lime, boards, nails, sand, window-frames, wrought iron, stone, shingles, slate, a wooden ball for the top, a cross, gilding of the cross: so go the items for moneys paid out; and so the course of the building may be followed through the succeeding autumn and winter and the springtime of 1803. Then came items about glass, painting, and plastering. As the dates run on into the summer, mention is made of planks for the altar, inside painting, silk to cover the picture, carpet, candlesticks, lamps, cherubs for the altar, gilding of the altar. It is September, 1803, on the paid-out side of the ledger. Mention must be made here of the very last items on the credit side:

From Mr. Carrol of Carrolton, \$36; from the Rt. Rev. Bishop \$100; Receipts from the collection on the day of dedication, \$289.50; Gift from the island of Martinique, \$331.14.

Then the summary is put down. Up to October 3rd:

We have raised among ourselves .....	\$10,741.68
We have received from Catholic friends .....	1,904.
From Protestants of this town and Salem and the late President of the United States .....	3,453.
On hand, before beginning subscription.....	426.
Received in interest .....	113.
Received on day of consecration .....	292.

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The accounts were balanced on the total of..... \$16,929.68

## VI

The last extraordinary service in the old church was the giving of Confirmation by Monsignor Denaut, the Bishop of Quebec, who made a visit to Boston during the week May 15th to 21st.

For three years Father Matignon had hoped in vain for a visit from Bishop Carroll. In March, 1801, for example, he had written to the Bishop:

Monseigneur, may we beg you to do this year what you had given us hope to expect last year? Far removed from you, as we are, poor and few in number also, we have almost no right to the favor of your visit, except a right out of your goodness and our own great desire. There would be possibly sixty to be confirmed.

Having learned that the Bishop could not come that year either, the eager pastor again expressed his desire for the visit, writing in July:

We hope next year to have a new title to it, so that it will not be again deferred. If you can then visit us in the autumn, you will unite the consecration of spiritual temples by confirmation to the consecration of the material temple, which we shall try to finish by that time.

However, the church had not continued, as planned, and Bishop Carroll was not well enough to come to Boston. Hence, Father Matignon had asked the Bishop of Quebec to visit Boston on the latter's way to Nova Scotia. In the end, however, he permitted only the smallest number of those prepared to receive the Sacrament from Bishop Denaut. The rest awaited the coming of Bishop Carroll himself in the autumn.<sup>45</sup>

Bishop Denaut, who gave fifty dollars to the church fund while here, was very much impressed by his stay in Boston. He later declared that he had been

<sup>45</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, April 1, 1803 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 9). Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, April 29, 1803 (*ibid.*, 2 N 5).

most honorably treated, showered with kindness and courtesies by the most distinguished persons. If I had stayed a month, as they wished, I would not have been able to dine once in my hotel. On my leaving, they expressed their regret in such a manner as to arouse the deepest gratitude of a heart far less susceptible than mine. What a difference from the past! Twenty years ago, they would have hanged me without even the form of a trial.<sup>46</sup>

Bishop Carroll arrived in Boston toward the end of September, 1803, and performed the dedication ceremony on Thursday, the 29th, the feast of St. Michael the Archangel. There was an overflow assembly. The number of Protestants was prodigious: the highest of Boston society was represented, and all treated the venerable prelate with marks of the greatest distinction. Even the body of the clergy had been increased for the occasion. Father Romagné came from Maine, and Father Tisserant from Connecticut, to join the Boston priests at the solemn function. They vested in the house of the Spanish Consul in Franklin Square and, escorted by many altar boys, moved in procession to the church. There the dedication was carried out according to the solemn rite of our religion and a Pontifical High Mass was celebrated. The sermon was delivered by Father Cheverus and deeply stirred the hearers, who were likewise moved by the unaccustomed solemn ceremonies of the Catholic ritual and the religious music of the Gregorian *Missa Regia*, sung that day for the first time in Boston. The ceremony ended with the singing of the *Te Deum*. To complete the celebration, as the day drew to a close, the exterior of the church was illuminated so that the entire front was resplendent with light, and the gilded cross surmounting the edifice stood out with the glow of a thousand lamps.

The Catholic congregation of Boston now possessed a church which belonged to them, and which was four times as large as the one which they had been using. It was besides capable of further enlargement. Inside the church there was a gallery which ran above the vestibule for the use of the choir and

<sup>46</sup> Bishop Denaut to Bishop Plessis, June 18, 1803 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

along both sides for the further accommodation of the faithful.

One of the Boston papers referred to the church as "very handsome and spacious, and well finished. The furniture of the sanctuary is elegant and rich."<sup>47</sup>

Even Mr. Bentley was almost satisfied. He noted that "the building was neat, but without a profusion of ornament; the altar not highly but handsomely decorated. The greater expenses have absorbed their liberality." Like everybody else, Mr. Bentley particularly remarked the altar piece, a painting of the Crucifixion from the brush of Lawrence Sargent, a Boston artist. It was one of the largest works up to that time undertaken in this country. Bentley thought it had "great merit," in the circumstances. Father Tisserant declared that it had "many defects," but noted that "it strikes the people and leaves a vivid impression on the mind of the Protestants."

The whole was a kind of miracle. Even with all the help supplied them by their friends, both Catholic and non-Catholic, the Boston congregation, a group of about one thousand workmen, day laborers, would have been utterly unable to establish what was called, "if not the largest, undoubtedly the loveliest church in Boston," without inconceivable sacrifices. The whole history of the church convinced Father Tisserant, from Connecticut, that it was "the product of a special intervention of Providence."

This scholarly priest pictured that congregation as composed, in great part, of Irish folk "who were drawn here by the miserable conditions that existed in their native country. . . . Here they found, through the zeal of the Catholic priests, a renewal of their religious sentiment and a betterment of their ways." The happy change in them was generally recognized, and they were sought after as laborers and particularly as domestics because they conducted themselves better than the others. Prominent Protestants addressed themselves almost daily to Father Matignon to procure their services, and considered it a favor when successful in obtaining them, and always treated them with the greatest regard. Their transformation under the

<sup>47</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 5, 1803.



guidance of our religion had been a means of dissipating many prejudices and putting many converts on the way to truth.

This was their time of triumph — “a triumph which there was no reason to expect a few years ago, and which would not have been believed if it had been foretold.”<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Annales critiques de littérature et de morale* (9e cahier, 1806), pp. 396 ff., *Bibliothèque Nationale*. Copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.* The letter itself was written from Boston between July 12 and Sept. 26, 1804.

Ten Commandments at least once a week. The 1858 regulations added a provision that the afternoon session should close "with appropriate singing."<sup>24</sup> From this it will be seen that in 1859 the Boston School Committee had a rule which made it imperative for the teacher to read the Bible, and that it was urged that this reading should be followed by the Lord's Prayer. This was to be said by the teacher or the pupils and teacher. A wish also was expressed that the children should learn and repeat the Ten Commandments once a week. School was to be closed by singing a hymn.

Now, of course, these orders and recommendations set up what was for all practical purposes a series of devotional exercises. In fact the 1857 regulation specifically stated that reading of the Scriptures was a devotional exercise. This was a perfectly acceptable state of affairs for Protestants, who, despite doctrinal disagreements, mingle freely in religious worship. But it was not agreeable to Catholics, who are not allowed to partake in religious exercises not approved by the Church. The singing of a hymn (generally it was "Old Hundred"), the reading of the Scriptures, the reciting of the Lord's Prayer in the Protestant version, and the memorizing of the Ten Commandments in the Protestant form were all opposed to Catholic principles. Catholics were, and of necessity had to be, conscientious objectors to these orders and counsels.

There seem, however, to have been some liberties taken in at least some Boston schools in the carrying-out of these orders. Evidently there was a consciousness of the conflict with the religious principles of the Catholics and an effort was made to adjust matters so that Catholic religious principles would not be violated. In the Eliot School there probably was for a time some kind of a policy of ignoring what could have been considered to be violations of the regulations by the pupils. This school had eight hundred pupils, of whom three fourths were Catholics.<sup>25</sup> Samuel Mason, the principal, declared that he

<sup>24</sup> I have taken all these rules, with the exception of the 1857 regulation, from a list given in the *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 15, 1859. The 1857 regulation will be found in *Rules of the Board of School Committee, 1857, City Doc. 18*, chap. VIII, sect. 5, p. 27.

<sup>25</sup> *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 15, 1859.

never made any objection if, when the boys were reciting the Our Father or the Commandments individually, they substituted the Catholic version for the Protestant.<sup>26</sup> But when they said these collectively, then he required that the Protestant version should be used. Yet, even in this case, he did not care if the Catholic boys remained silent — in fact, he claimed that in some instances the boys actually said their own version.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Mason had instructed his teachers not to punish boys who did this.<sup>28</sup> Apparently the master followed a liberal policy, yet with strange inconsistency he asserted that, although he never objected to verbal changes in the Our Father, as for example “hallowed” for “sanctified,” yet he also claimed that he would not allow the Roman Catholic form to be used in his school. Since substituting words of the Catholic version in the Protestant text practically meant using the Catholic form, it is hard to understand exactly what his policy was.

In carrying out these orders and recommendations of the Boston School Committee, it was the custom in the Eliot School to open each week by reading a passage from the Bible, then the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were recited. One Monday morning, March 7th, Miss Shepard, one of the Eliot staff, began what was the second term of the school year by requiring her boys to recite the Commandments individually. Her purpose was to make sure that they knew them. Thomas Wall was called, and he refused to say them. The boy had never done this before because he had always been allowed to make whatever changes were necessary in order to conform to the Catholic text. But this time the teacher would not permit the boy to do this. He was told to say the Commandments as they were in the spelling book; that is, in the Protestant version. He declined to do that because his father had forbidden him to use this form.<sup>29</sup> The teacher kept pressing him until finally he said that he did not know the Protestant version.

<sup>26</sup> *Boston Journal*, March 16, 1859; *Boston Pilot*, March 21, 1859.

<sup>27</sup> *Boston Daily Traveller*, loc. cit.

<sup>28</sup> *Boston Journal*, March 19, 1859; *Boston Daily Traveller*, March 19, 1859.

<sup>29</sup> *Boston Journal*, March 18, 1859; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 19, 1859.



any one venture to come to see me in that situation, I take him gently by the arm, till he be without, telling him to come again when sober. Generally speaking, quoddy's tribe is a good one. . . .

Of Penobscot, which he visited in September, he wrote:

My interpreter there is a respectable man hundred and twelve years old.<sup>4</sup> He many times lamented at the behaviour of his brethren. He told me more than I would have known. I have not been prodigal of absolutions. Good many however come to Confession. Number of women good, the generality of men not much prise worthy. . . .

Since I am a priest of yours, I have baptised 45 children, buried an old woman, and a child; 2 marriages; 2 women, the one presbyterian, the other of the church of England, have made profession of Catholic faith. Another comes to instruction. Two others seem well inclined, would to God they will embrace truth.<sup>5</sup>

In a very short time he made great progress in his mission. Hardly a year after his coming the Massachusetts Legislature, in consequence of a petition signed by him and the Indians, granted them a house, barn, and ninety acres of cleared land, adjacent to the Indian village at Pleasant Point. This was in addition to the annual stipend of two hundred dollars for the priest which he collected regularly from the State.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> This was Orono, who died only in the next year, 113 years old (*Columbian Centinel*, March 21, 1801).

<sup>5</sup> Father Romagné to Bishop Carroll, Passamaquoddy, Jan. 25, 1800 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 7 E 6).

<sup>6</sup> *Passamaquoddy Papers*, Original. Senate Resolve concurred in by the House, Feb. 27, 1801, "that a tract of land situated in Passamaquoddy Bay, in the County of Washington, called Pleasant Point, containing ninety acres, the property of this Commonwealth, be and hereby is appropriated to the use and improvement of the said Tribe of Indians till the further order of the legislature, it being the remainder of one hundred acres of land, purchased by this Commonwealth of John Frost in the year 1794. Approved March 4, 1801. A true copy, Attest John Avery, Secy." See also Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 10, 1801, and Father Matignon to the Bishop, March 16, 1801. Note that in both 1800 and 1801, Father Romagné collected his annual stipend of \$200 from the State of Massachusetts, as Father Cheverus had done in 1799. See *Mass. Council Records*, June 14, 1799, June 18, 1800, and June 9, 1801.



By the early summer of 1804, Father Romagné had his new establishment going.<sup>7</sup> Some time earlier, the priest had also obtained three hundred dollars from the State for building a permanent church at Pleasant Point. This church he finished in the spring or summer of 1804. It was hoped that it would help to stabilize the tribe more efficiently and thus facilitate their civilization. Father Romagné planned to teach the women to spin and weave, etc., and the men to cultivate the land. Indeed, by 1804, several Indians already had enclosures and began to plant corn. It was the priest's desire to stabilize them in some place far removed from the whites, because he felt that their wandering life and their proximity to white people were the great occasions of their faults and vices. Thus his ideas were identical with those of many former missionaries. In fact, his policy was partly due to his experience among some of their disciples, for he found that some of the older Indians had so successfully resisted the unbridled passion for drink that "many had never touched a single drop, and could not even be tempted to."<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, he himself had a personal aversion to strong drink.<sup>9</sup>

Another reason for his great influence with the Indians was his knowledge of their language. He studied it assiduously, and was able by the same summer of 1804 to finish the manuscript of an Indian prayer-book. This manuscript, which was printed in 1834 by order of Bishop Fenwick, bore the title *The Indian Prayer Book, compiled and arranged for the benefit of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Tribes*.<sup>10</sup>

Father Romagné likewise introduced vaccination among the Indians. During the spring of 1804 he had successfully inocu-

<sup>7</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 11).

<sup>8</sup> Source for most of the above and for what follows, when not otherwise indicated, is Father Tisserant's letter in the *Annales Critiques*, etc., already cited. Father Tisserant merely reflects there the words of Father Romagné, whom he met in Boston. See also Father Tisserant to Bishop Carroll, Sept. 26, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 8 H 2).

<sup>9</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, May 26, 1804; Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*ibid.*).

<sup>10</sup> Printed by H. L. Devereux, Boston, 1834, 12mo. pp. 72. There is a copy of the printed book in the *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

lated more than one hundred and fifty of the Passamaquoddy tribe, and in August of that same year began the same treatment with the Penobscots.<sup>11</sup>

For some short period of time he occupied the position of Indian Agent of the State for his two tribes; but after some correspondence with Bishop Carroll on the matter, he determined to resign that office. It was hoped that by so doing he could unite with his Indian obligations some missionary work among the Newcastle Catholic group. This would benefit the latter and perhaps be a pleasing recreation to him, and it would also relieve Father Cheverus from spending so much time away from Boston.<sup>12</sup> In fact, this plan was finally decided on and was to be put into effect in the fall and winter of 1805-1806. On the occasion of its promulgation, Father Romagné received from General Benjamin Lincoln the following letter of introduction to General Knox, who lived near Newcastle:

Dear Sir,

This will be deliver [sic] by Mr. Romanié the Catholic instructor of the Passamaquoddy & Penobscot tribes. His attempts to Christianize those tribes have I think been followed with success. He comes next winter into your neighborhood [Thomaston]. If you shall meet with him in your walks, embrace him; his character will authorize your most affectionate attention. I write to you thus, knowing that you are no bigot but that the honest man you embrace & protect.<sup>13</sup>

The new arrangement gave Father Romagné better opportunity for visits to Boston, which he made with fairly regular frequency in the latter years.

## II

The new church in Boston introduced a new period of Catholic religious life in that town itself. Almost immediately after

<sup>11</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>12</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, May 26, 1804; Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 19, 1805, and July 15, 1805 (*ibid.*).

<sup>13</sup> General Benjamin Lincoln to General Henry Knox, Sept. 16, 1805, *Knox Papers*, XLVI, p. 83; original in ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*

the dedication of the new church, there is mention in the records of a new priests' house; also of a new prayer-book; of a new organ for the church, of an increased number of communions, of more frequent devotions, of the establishment of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, of the growing membership, and the constant attendance of Protestants at the services, and of converts. Each of these items was a sign of the vigorous Catholic life of the Boston congregation. There is likewise mention of many requests for help from others, deceivers as well as sincere folk; another sure sign of the religious reputation of the Boston Catholics. Most striking perhaps of all, and least known, is the story of a parochial school.

A few days after the church was dedicated, Father Matignon moved from School Street to Franklin Street, where he took up residence in the building that adjoined the church. There the priests' house, often called the Franklin Street Convent, remained for many years. During these years it was also the assembly place for the church committee meetings, but its rent (purchase?) and its support are never mentioned in the church books. The money for these was paid by the pastor, in part out of the small offertories, but mostly from his personal funds.<sup>14</sup>

In the church itself, one sign of its more vigorous life was the music that accompanied the services. When Father Cheverus first went to the Indians of Maine, he was especially struck by their age-old custom of chanting the hymns of the Church; and concluded that it had been of great benefit not only to the solemnity of the service, but to their preservation of the Faith. He was also particularly attracted to some of their native religious music. As has already been stated, Father Cheverus, like Father Matignon himself, was fond of music, and had often assisted in the choir. When he started services among the Catholics of Maine, one of the things he most emphasized was the hymns in *Challoner's Manual*. On his trip to Maine in 1800, Father Cheverus had a hymn book of his own to distribute there, as he had already done in Boston.

<sup>14</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, Oct. 7, 1803; Father Tisserant, *loc. cit.*

The book was entitled *Anthems, Hymns, &c. Usually Sung at the Catholick Church in Boston*.<sup>15</sup> Of its seventy-two pages, forty-seven were devoted to hymns. In 1803, the author got out a new edition. By adding some prayers for Mass, confession, communion, collects for the Sundays, feasts, etc., he made a volume of nearly three hundred pages.<sup>16</sup> The new church started with a new service book. This *Roman Catholic Manual*, whatever its literary history or inspiration, was plainly an attempt by Father Cheverus to make Catholic services more attractive and available to the people.

Toward the middle of the year 1804, Father Matignon made arrangements with Mr. Goodrich, organ builder of Boston, to replace the small organ already in use by a new one, especially built for the church. On July 30, 1804, the pastor wrote to Bishop Carroll about the arrangements for financing the matter, and later on made a contract with the builder. This called for "a good, well-tuned and sounding organ, composed of fifteen stops, with all its appurtenances, and equal at least to the best in town." At first, Father Matignon carried the expenses out of the church's ordinary revenue, but when the payments for the pews largely declined in the latter part of 1805, he began a series of special collections, and paid the final installments on the organ in 1808.<sup>17</sup>

After the new church was dedicated, extra services were expected by the people; indeed, it also became a kind of necessity, for larger numbers were attracted to the new edifice. Besides the extra Mass, henceforth always celebrated on Sundays and holy-days, there was an increased number of devotions. Old ones were revived, new ones introduced. Among the devotions regularly carried on in the new church special mention should be made of those carried on by the Confraternity or Association

<sup>15</sup> Printed by Manning and Loring (Boston, 1800). Copies in *Boston Public Library* and *Boston Athenaeum*.

<sup>16</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 28, 1804; Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 26, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*): *Roman Catholic Manual, or Collection of Prayers, Anthems, Hymns, &c.* (Boston). Printed by Manning and Loring, 2 Cornhill, Dec., 1803, pp. 287. (Copy in possession of Mrs. Boynton, Middleboro, Mass.).

<sup>17</sup> *Account Book*, pp. 156, 143, 135, etc.



of the Blessed Sacrament. This society was probably already in existence in the old church, for when Father Matignon requested the rules of the Confraternity from Bishop Carroll on January 28, 1804, he said he desired them for the sake of greater uniformity. These rules, printed in Baltimore in 1794, were intended to aid in the better worship and honor of the Blessed Sacrament, partly by making "reparation for the many profanations of, and great disrespect toward, this wonderful Sacrament by unbelievers, Libertines [and] wicked Catholics." The rules required an hour's adoration once a year, and oftener if possible; monthly communion, frequent attendance at Holy Mass, and the "endeavour to translate into one's own life those wonderful examples of charity, humility, obedience, mortification . . . discoverable in Jesus Christ, veiling his Majesty . . . under the symbols of bread and wine." After these rules were received in Boston, Father Cheverus promoted the devotion zealously, both here and in Maine.<sup>18</sup> Among several reasons prompting special mention of this devotion here is the fact that out of it there developed, some ten years later, the well-known Boston Confraternity of the Holy Cross.

In the course of each year the church also witnessed the pleasing and touching ceremony of First Communions. In 1807, for example, First Communion was observed on the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, when "eighteen young girls and ten boys from twelve to fourteen [years of age] made their First Communion."<sup>19</sup>

Another annual ceremony, held either on Holy Saturday or the Saturday after Easter, was the solemn baptism of adults. It was a custom already begun in the old church, but in the new church Father Matignon, desirous of adding to the solemnity, prepared for it, among other things, a special baptismal font in which there was "a marble urn for baptism."<sup>20</sup>

One may gather from the date when solemn baptism was conferred that special classes for converts were held during the Lenten season.

<sup>18</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 26, 1804.

<sup>19</sup> Father Cheverus to Mrs. Seton, June 8, 1807.

<sup>20</sup> *Account Book*, p. 131, last item; see also p. 117.

Among other noteworthy services in the new church in those first days was the Papal Jubilee of 1805, held in February or March. For this celebration, the church was open every day with services morning and evening, the latter ending with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Despite the short time that Father Matignon and the people had to prepare for it, the Jubilee was celebrated here "with edification and profit. Two hundred eighty persons, at least, received Holy Communion the Sunday that it closed."<sup>21</sup>

After the church was dedicated, there was still a deficit of some two thousand dollars to be paid on the building, and this, together with the regular contributions for the payments on the pews, occasioned further sacrifices on the people's part. That was one reason for the difficulty experienced, even after two years, in paying for the new organ. Another and a greater reason was the continuous calls made upon the congregation for donations to other pious causes.

First among these, in order of both time and importance, was the building of the Cathedral in Baltimore. To this work, Boston Catholics gave over twelve hundred dollars, some two hundred dollars in straight gifts and one thousand dollars in the form of one hundred tickets purchased for the lottery.<sup>22</sup> They also gave a tidy sum of about three hundred dollars to a certain Irish Capuchin missionary, named Father Flinn, who visited here in July, 1804. In the following year they gave a similar amount to the Superior of a Trappist group, Father Urbain Guillet, who was collecting to make a foundation in this country. When one adds to these collections the eight

<sup>21</sup> *Baltimore Sem. Arch.* Father Matignon to Father Du Bourg, 1805, no date, but the date must have been about April 1.

*Note.* One very small item in the *Account Book* has a very important content. It reads, "March 27, 1804 — Steps for the little altar" (*Account Book*, p. 121). This item seems to prove that the altar used in the old church had been saved and brought over to the new church, where it was set up, probably in the Vestry, for use on weekdays in the cold weather. That was the altar upon which Fathers La Poterie, Rousselet, and Thayer had said Mass — a precious relic of Catholic continuity in Boston.

<sup>22</sup> *Account Book*, p. 118; Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 28, July 30, Nov. 12, 1804, Jan. 29, 1805 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); cf. Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, p. 729.

hundred dollars or so contributed in the form of lottery subscriptions to the Catholic college in Baltimore in 1806, one realizes the extraordinary generosity of that early Boston congregation. One understands, at the same time, their embarrassment in properly providing, as they would have wished, for their own internal needs.

### III

On January 24, 1804, at the committee meeting which closed the accounts for the church building, the future needs of the parish were considered and several new projects were brought up. Of these, the very first was "Some provision for a School." On this matter it was decided that "till a house or room can be provided for a school, and till the Congregation be able to bear the expense, a small compensation be paid to the young gentleman who now keeps a school, to enable him at least to pay a part of his rent, of at least ten dollars a quarter."<sup>23</sup> This is the first known reference to a Catholic school actually functioning in Boston. The "young gentleman" who kept it was named John Cinnot, as Father Matignon wrote it, or Sinnnot, as it was more commonly spelled. This young man, born in Ireland, was known to Bishop Carroll as "our young school-master." He had, therefore, been keeping his school since at least the time of the church's dedication. No known document indicates how long before that date the school began; nor is there any knowledge of where the rented room was in which the school was held.<sup>24</sup>

Later the church took over the school completely. Items in the church books show its continuous existence from January 1, 1804, until November 5, 1807. In this same regard it is worth noting that during the years 1805-1806 the books also mention several payments for "the schooling of poor girls at Mrs. Torpey's school."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Account Book*, p. 119.

<sup>24</sup> John Cinnot appeared as godfather at a baptism in Holy Cross Church, Boston, on Dec. 11, 1803.

<sup>25</sup> Mrs. Sarah Torpey, an excellent Catholic, died Dec. 7, 1806 (*Church Register*, p. 195).

Father Matignon had the conviction that a separate fund for a school was a necessity.<sup>26</sup> But the poverty of the congregation prevented his launching a subscription at that time; then the matter of the organ put it temporarily out of consideration. An extremely interesting move to accomplish the purpose was projected in the spring of 1806. On April 3rd of that year, the following letter was written by one of the new Boston converts, Dr. Stephen C. Blyth. It was directed to the President of the Massachusetts Senate, and is self-explanatory.

Sir,

The Roman Catholics have it in contemplation to establish a charity school in Boston, for the exclusive instruction of poor children of their own communion. For this purpose, a fund will be necessary which they hope to create by a lottery, if the General Court will grant one to their petition. Some fears are however, entertained with regard to the success of an application of this nature. A law has, I understand, been passed that in future no Lotteries shall be permitted, except in support of objects of public utility. It may be alledged that the Establishment in demand cannot plead this advantage, as public schools are numerous & open to youth of all persuasions. I need not affect to furnish a Gentleman of your intelligence with arguments to refute this suggestion — for it is well known to many, whose sphere of information is much more circumscribed than yours, that Catholics have an involuntary & afflicting scruple of sending their children to the common schools, where the integrity of their peculiar faith is apt to be shaken by heedlessness or design. Nor are instances infrequent of Catholics preferring the inconvenience & scantiness of domestic education, & even the want of any, to the hazard of this exposure. The question then is, whether a Legislature should indulge a supposed, but innocent prejudice, productive of much good; or slight & oppose it, to the injury of thousands of a rising generation & in detriment to our national interests. . . .<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 11).

<sup>27</sup> Stephen C. Blyth to Harrison Gray Otis, *Otis Papers* (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*), April 3, 1806.



That letter is the only known bit of evidence about the lottery scheme which, it is plain, never came to anything.<sup>28</sup>

Father Matignon, however, did not give up trying. On September 16, 1806, the church *Account Book* notes a "Subscription for a Catholic School." The first contribution came from "Mrs. Baley (?) one guinea (\$4.75)." The next was dated "December 21, Mrs. Josselin, \$3.30." The subscription was then temporarily discontinued.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Carroll: "Our only affliction here is our inability hitherto and perhaps for years hence to finance a Catholic school, which is absolutely indispensable for us."<sup>30</sup>

However, on June 8, 1807, the subscription was renewed. In a little more than a month the donations had grown to \$502.51, of which the two priests had given \$25 apiece. By November 12, 1807, the total amount collected was \$573.01.<sup>31</sup> Confident that the subscription would now be successful, the pastor, on August 3, 1807, paid out \$2000.75 to Mr. Walley for his land, next to the church property.

There is some probability that in this larger venture Father Matignon had fostered the hope of founding not only a primary school, but also a secondary one. At that time he already had six boys studying for the priesthood in various places. He also had been promised money for a "little seminary." Nevertheless, promises, hopes, purchase of land did not at that time result in a school.

#### IV

The first known schoolmaster, John Sinnot, aspired to the priesthood, and actually entered St. Mary's Seminary in Balti-

<sup>28</sup> On Feb. 28, 1801, an act had been passed by the Massachusetts Legislature forbidding lotteries, except for objects of public utility (*Acts and Resolves, 1800-1801*, p. 68). On Jan. 17, 1806, Father Du Bourg, President of Baltimore College, had received permission from the Maryland Legislature to conduct a lottery for his college. He was a friend and correspondent of Father Matignon. Cf. J. Ruane, *The Beginnings of St. Sulpice in the United States* (Washington, 1935), p. 126.

<sup>29</sup> *Account Book*, p. 253.

<sup>30</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Nov. 25, 1806 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>31</sup> *Account Book*, pp. 260, 261, 246.

more on June 12, 1804. During the course of the year 1805, he was placed at the college as prefect of the students, without, however, renouncing his intention of becoming an ecclesiastic. During the spring of 1806, he was back in Boston, teaching in the school there, but in the autumn he again returned to the college.<sup>32</sup>

He was not the first known Boston young man to start studying for the priesthood. A few months before there was any question of Sinnot's going to the Seminary, Father Matignon had conferred with Bishop Carroll about another of his protégés, a certain Michael White. This first candidate was at that time in his sixteenth year and was head altar boy, having served on the altar for at least seven years faithfully and devoutly. He was also of good character and studious. His father, John White, one of the fairly well-to-do members of the congregation, probably a boarding-house keeper, could, in Father Matignon's estimation, afford to pay at least a hundred dollars a year for the boy's board, tuition, etc. As a result of the Boston conversation between the Bishop and Father Matignon,<sup>33</sup> the boy was enrolled at Georgetown on May 2, 1804. But he did not continue as a seminarian. On October 10, 1806, he became a member of the newly revived Society of Jesus and began his noviceship. (There is some interest in the fact that one of his fellow novices was Benedict Fenwick, who later became our second bishop.)

In 1805, Father Matignon, hoping to recruit the clergy still further, sent away a third young student. This candidate was named Edward Barton, one of two brothers whom Father Tisserant brought to America to be educated. From the time of the departure of White and Sinnot, Father Tisserant had been making inquiries about the cost of tuition and the like,<sup>34</sup> and finally, through Father Matignon's good offices, placed the boy in the Sulpician College of St. Mary's at Baltimore.

That same autumn the Boston pastor sent to Georgetown

<sup>32</sup> J. Ruane, *Beginnings of St. Sulpice*, p. 56.

<sup>33</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 26, 1804.

<sup>34</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, March 26, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

a fourth aspirant to the priesthood. This was Michael Burns, Jr., the only son of Michael Burns, one of the former wardens of the congregation and a strong bulwark of the infant church here.<sup>35</sup> The zealous Father Matignon, still pursuing his pastoral search for possible young levites, had his eye also on the sons of the famous Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill. In the autumn of 1805, he had a chance to see these boys during a visit which he made to Newcastle. He afterwards wrote to Bishop Carroll, "Both Mr. Cheverus and I will do all we can to persuade Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill to send each their oldest boy [to Georgetown]. We are eager that the college take on again all the *éclat*, which it is naturally destined to possess."

The boys referred to were Edward Kavanagh and John Cottrill. Edward was then hardly eleven years old (born April 27, 1795, baptized October 24, 1795) and John Cottrill was a year older (baptized August 30, 1794). Both fathers actually sent their sons to college, but not to Georgetown. In the autumn of 1806, the boys went to Montreal College. The reason for this change in Father Matignon's plan is not known, but it may well have been connected with Michael White's joining the Jesuits at Georgetown. There are, however, some grounds for believing that the change in plans arose from the Boston pastor's unwillingness to take sides in certain difficulties then existing between Georgetown and St. Mary's in Baltimore. In any case, the two new aspirants went to Montreal.<sup>36</sup>

There they made an excellent impression. One of their teachers later wrote very eulogistically of them, particularly of Edward Kavanagh.<sup>37</sup> The two boys remained in Montreal until the end of the summer term of 1810, and they intended to return to Montreal in the autumn.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 17, 1806, incorrectly filed in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.* as Feb. 17, 1800. Michael had been baptized on June 22, 1792, by Father Thayer.

<sup>36</sup> Father Matignon to Father Du Bourg, Nov. 19, 1807 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

<sup>37</sup> Rev. Aeneas MacDonald to the Sisters of Charity at Boston, Dec. 20, 1853 (*Private Archives*, made available through the kindness of Rev. Eric F. MacKenzie).

<sup>38</sup> Father Matignon to Le Saulnier, Sept. 2, 1810 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal. Copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

Thus, during the three years 1804-1806, Father Matignon had sent six boys to study for the priesthood. No other Boston aspirants to this high office are heard of in the next few years, except one, John Ward, the son of one of the wardens of the Boston church, who was in Georgetown in 1810.<sup>39</sup> At that date young Ward was some fourteen years of age.

It is not improbable, as has already been hinted, that the existence of these six seminarians had some influence on the formation of Father Matignon's enlarged program for the school in Boston in 1806. In this same year there was some talk of founding a preparatory seminary in Boston or in the District of Maine. The idea was mentioned by Father Thayer, who by this time had left Kentucky and gone to England, whence he kept up a continuous correspondence with Father Matignon.

In one of his letters to the Boston pastor,<sup>40</sup> Father Thayer made two propositions, one of which read thus:

The intended little Seminary at Conewago suggests the idea of establishing one at Boston or in . . . Maine. If the Sulpicians can undertake 'it (as it enters into my plan of giving all for the education of youth), I authorize you to give them \$4000 toward purchasing a house and farm, when they are actually ready to begin the establishment.

Nothing further came of this proposal.

It is interesting and perhaps relevant to note that already in July, 1805, Father Matignon had received from Father Thayer a letter written in England and containing, among other matters, a request for permission "to bring or send to America as many priests and nuns as can be provided for. . . . My view is to make an establishment in New England." In commenting thereon to the Bishop, Father Matignon assured the latter that he actually was in possession of considerable funds belonging to Father Thayer, and that

despite the accusations of cupidity to which [Father Thayer] has unfortunately given occasion, I continue to believe that he

<sup>39</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, Nov. 26, 1810 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>40</sup> Cited by Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll on Nov. 25, 1806 (*ibid.*).



is sincere in declaring that he is eager to use them in pious establishments. . . . It seems to me . . . that an establishment of nuns, destined to the education of girls, such as the Moravians have copied with such success in Bethlehem, would, if once formed by Father Thayer's money, and with picked subjects, accomplish for young ladies what Father DuBourg is so successfully doing for boys, and would be a blessing for your diocese. . . .<sup>41</sup>

Father Matignon made no mention of the project's being started in Boston: on the other hand, he made no mention of anything to the contrary. From all this, however, nothing actual eventuated. A Catholic school in Boston, whether primary or secondary, for boys or for girls, was still a matter of the future.

About this time there was a contact between the Boston priests and Harvard College. It came about through the presence of a Catholic student in this institution. He was a certain John Lee, the son of the Governor of the State of Maryland. The boy had spent some years in the study of the classics at Georgetown, and in May, 1804, was sent by his father to pursue his education at Harvard. He was the bearer of letters from Bishop Carroll both to the President of Harvard and to Father Matignon. In the letter to the former, the Bishop, after speaking of the boy's previous studies, etc., said:

It is presumed, from the general temper prevailing in your State, that he will have every opportunity of attending regularly on the duties of his religion and the instructions of Dr. Matignon: this point is, to those who are interested in him, of such consequence, that they prefer it to every other consideration.<sup>42</sup>

The young man arrived in Boston on June 18th, and reported immediately to Father Matignon, who wrote at once to the Bishop, and, while offering every service to the boy, declared his fears about the possible effect on the boy's

piety and perhaps his religion of his residence in Cambridge and the puritanical spirit of the teachers and the philosophical

<sup>41</sup> July 15, 1805.

<sup>42</sup> Bishop Carroll to President Willard, May 14, 1804 (*Harvard Univ. Arch.*).

spirit of the students. I implore his dear parents in all their letters to unite their efforts to my own feeble attempts to preserve him from what I believe to be a very dangerous contagion.<sup>43</sup>

The President of the College naturally gave the boy freedom to attend the Catholic church in Boston. Nevertheless, that the fears entertained by Bishop and pastor were well-founded appears in a vote, taken by the Harvard Corporation two years later, permitting young Lee, at his father's request, "to attend public worship at the Episcopal Church in Cambridge."<sup>44</sup>

## V

On May 1, 1798, Father Matignon reckoned the number of the Boston congregation as from six to seven hundred. By 1803, it had grown to at least one thousand. Part of the increase was due to conversions, and these were in great measure due to Father Cheverus.

In the beginning of 1802, Father Matignon, giving Bishop Carroll a report of the Boston parish, said:

The increase is not rapid, although it is real. It is almost wholly restricted to the class which our Divine Savior would have particularly loved to instruct. The rich have too little leisure to busy themselves with the study of religion, or too much pride and human respect to embrace the true religion. . . . The progress is more rapid and consoling in the little mission of the East.<sup>45</sup>

After the dedication of the new church, a fair-sized group of non-Catholics was always to be remarked among the Boston congregation. They were attracted not only by curiosity and a desire to learn about Catholic worship, but especially by Father Cheverus' preaching. In 1804, his friend, Father Tisserant, declared:

<sup>43</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>44</sup> *Harvard Univ. Arch., Coll. Records*, IV, 130-131. See also *Otis Papers (Mass. Hist. Soc.)*, Dec. 26, 1806, and March 2, 1807.

<sup>45</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 23, 1802 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

He is generally regarded as the best preacher in Boston and by many as the best they have heard in America. I, myself, confess that I never heard anyone who made a better impression on me. His eloquence is brilliant, agreeable, full of unction, and captivating. Many who came to hear him out of curiosity were so touched that they have become converted. . . . [By both his preaching and his character] he sustains and advances the cause. He is still young, full of energy and zeal, but he is working so hard that [his friends] fear a proximate exhaustion. Unfortunately, he cannot restrain himself; the idea of the good he can do prevents him listening to [our] daily remonstrances.<sup>46</sup>

Protestants were also attracted by the impression made on them by Bishop Carroll when he was in Boston. According to Father Matignon, the Bishop had occasioned much of the increasing good evident in the Boston church after its dedication. "A number of respectable Protestants frequent our new church; their prejudices are being gradually dissipated. May these happy beginnings lead them to embrace the truth."<sup>47</sup>

The impression which the Bishop made on non-Catholics may be gathered from the following entry in the *Diary* of Mr. Bentley of Salem:

October 22, 1803

Bishop Carroll of Maryland is in town this morning. He has been into Maine to visit a Catholic Congregation on the Kennebec. He was accompanied with Mr. Chevrus of Boston & the Revd. Mr. Romagné from Maine. The Bishop is a fine man at 68 years of age. Speaks freely. Converses on all subjects as a man of literature. He came into town late last evening. Mr. Chevrus gave me notice this morning. We conversed upon various topics & Mr. Romagné informed us of his greater success with the Dam[ar]iscotta [*sic* for Passamaquoddy] than Penobscot Indians. The Bishop visited our Museum, & was pleased with its progress. He was determined to reach Boston this morning.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Annales de littérature*, etc.

<sup>47</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 28, 1804.

<sup>48</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, III, 55.

In 1804, the year after the Bishop's visit, the Boston congregation was reckoned by Father Tisserant as numbering about a thousand, of whom "the great majority are Irish, the others are American converts, and among both classes there are very many who edify by their piety and their fervor."

This is but one piece of the ample and oft-repeated evidence, attesting a steady stream of converts to the Catholic Church in Boston during these years from Anglo-Saxon stock. The church books contain, for example, names such as Mary Phillips, George Stevens, Mary Thompson, Anna Pope, Thomas Davison, Susanna Goggin, Lucy Little, Anna Jennison, Helen Harris, Mercy Brick, Mary Wiley, Mary Robinson, Clotilda Montgomery, John Rogers, Susanna Foster, Elizabeth Stringer, Catherine Davenport, William Darrell, Elizabeth Wilson, Mary Dawes, Elizabeth Simmons, Sarah Bodge, Mary West, Catherine Howard, Ann West, Anna Collet, Martha Underwood, Mary Butler, Henrietta Bowman, Mary Lee, Mary Taylor, Eleanor Nelson, John Campbell, Walter Trumbal, Frances Towles, Mary Humphrey, Elizabeth Jennison, Lucy Greene, Sarah Judge, Rebecca Bartlett, Lydia Flagg, Nathaniel Stowell, Margaret Whitney, Susanna Batchelder, Elijah Whitney, Noah Bartlet, Margaret Bartlet, Sarah Thoys (?), Sarah Haynes, Catherine Haynes, George Bell, Anna Lawrence. These names run all the way from 1797 to 1809. The numbers per year run from eight to fifteen, with the peak in the years before 1807.

Anyone reading the *Baptismal Register* of the church during this period is also struck by the number of colored people who received the Sacrament. In the year 1800 alone, there were fifteen, mostly adults; none of these is included among those named above. From 1797 onward, large numbers of colored folk came to Massachusetts, both from the West Indies and the Southern States, and were the object of much thought and solicitude on the part both of Government and individuals. The Catholic church here evidently took a praiseworthy share in this matter, and its efforts in this direction bore much fruit.<sup>49</sup>

Another factor in the Boston church's growth was the so-

<sup>49</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXXV, 72 f.



called mixed marriage, for many of the recorded conversions came from that source. Nevertheless, this factor worked also in an opposite direction. On a certain occasion, Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Carroll that he was

firmly resolved for the future, never to lend [his] ministry to a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant. These marriages have hitherto been very common here, on account of the small number of Catholic girls: but this necessity is no longer so great. Besides, several of such marriages have turned out very unfortunately.<sup>50</sup>

Among other interesting observations about the converts is the fact that they often ran in families. Sometimes whole families became Catholics. Perhaps the most notable example of this was the Coffin family, in which there were five girls. One of them, Mary, was baptized by Father Matignon, in 1796, on the occasion of her marriage to Peter Dunphy. She was then nineteen years old. A second daughter, Margaret, came into the church the next year, when she was thirty-four. At the end of that same year, a third daughter, Lydia, then eighteen, followed both her sisters. During the Lent of 1798, Elisa, another sister, was baptized and after Easter was married to Gamaliel Bates. Some years later, in 1806, still another girl of the same family, Abigail, married Patrick O'Rourke. This last marriage was performed by a Protestant minister; but shortly afterwards there is a record of this family's being Catholic also.

There were likewise three Bartletts, two Wests, two Haynes, two Phillips, two Jennisons, two Wileys, etc., among those who became Catholics.<sup>51</sup>

The *Baptismal Register* does not show the whole story of conversions. It was much more common then than now to recognize the validity of non-Catholic baptisms. For example, it is probable that one of the most active and popular young women in the church of the early 1800's was Elizabeth Theresa

<sup>50</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, March 19, 1801.

<sup>51</sup> At Easter time in Boston, in 1806, about five hundred persons received Holy Communion, among them six adult converts, who were baptized on Holy Thursday. Father Tisserant to Mrs. Seton, April 22, 1806 (*Emmitsburg Arch.*).

Adams, a convert. She is known to have directed the choir in the old church, but neither her name nor that of her parents appears in the baptismal records. Her name appears first in these records on September 21, 1800, as a godmother and thereafter frequently in the ensuing years. She was not rich, being able to give only one dollar towards the building of the new church. She was one of the persons confirmed by Bishop Denaut here on May 19, 1803. Two years later she married Thomas Daniels and had an exceptionally large crowd at her wedding. She and others less active or popular probably had made profession of the Catholic faith, and cannot be traced because they were not re-baptized.

Among the converts in 1802 was Anna Cecilia de Neufville, daughter of the wife of Juan Stoughton, the Spanish Consul, by a previous marriage. At the time of her baptism (June 6th) the girl was seventeen years of age, and Father Matignon, who was then in New York, wrote her mother a beautiful letter, congratulating her on the happiness which her daughter had just experienced and on her own pious dispositions, which would soon lead her also into the Church.<sup>52</sup>

There was likewise another kind of convert, the deathbed penitent, whose conversion was sometimes not published. For example, on January 29, 1805, Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Carroll:

We have recently lost the English consul, who, before his death made profession of his religion. The progress of his malady was so speedy that he could receive only Extreme Unction. His widow, much to her regret, feels herself forced by the hope of government aid for herself and her children who are eight or ten in number, to have him buried according to the Anglican rite. His oldest son died a Catholic two years ago at Montreal College, and there is reason to believe that one, at least, of his daughters will become a Catholic.

Outstanding among the many people to whose conversion the two Boston priests contributed during this period was one who never even visited Boston. She was the saintly Elizabeth

<sup>52</sup> *Boston Dioc. Arch.*, July 15, 1802.

Seton, of New York, afterwards the foundress of the American Sisters of Charity. Her contact with the Boston priests came about through Anthony Filicchi, a member of the kindly and warm-hearted family that befriended Mrs. Seton in Italy. After her return to America, she was seriously meditating the claims of the Catholic Church, and Anthony planned to bring her case to the attention of Bishop Carroll, to whom he had letters of introduction from his brother in Italy. But it happened that he went to Boston on business. From here, on October 8, 1804, he wrote to Mrs. Seton the most lavish praise of the Boston priests.

Oh, my good friend, with what worthy clergymen are the Catholics here blessed! Their countenance, their conduct, their doctrine, are acknowledged almost with enthusiasm by the Protestants themselves. Every Sunday our church is crowded by them to hear the sermon of our learned and eloquent Cheverus; and some conversions take place without any murmuring at all.<sup>53</sup>

Anthony Filicchi's own fervent Catholicity and his contact with the family of the Spanish Consul brought him into intimate contact with the Boston priests. When he returned to New York, he was full of their praises.<sup>54</sup> On February 19, 1805, he wrote from there to Father Cheverus in Boston:

Dear Sir,

A young English gentleman of my acquaintance going to Boston, I eagerly avail myself of the opportunity to forward the promised artificial flowers to our worthy Dr. Matignon for the ornament of his dear Spouse. Be pleased to beg him to accept of them. . . . In payment . . . would he remember me in his prayers. . . .

Mrs. S., I am in full hopes, will be finally a good Rom. Catholick with her five children. Considering Bishop Carroll too much occupied, I have suggest (to) her to have recourse to you in her scruples and anxieties, for instruction, comfort,

<sup>53</sup> *Emmitsburg Arch.*

<sup>54</sup> Madame de Barberey, *Elizabeth Seton*, translated by J. B. Code (2nd ed.: New York, 1931), p. 148.

advice, and she is actually writing to you. You will have, it becomes you, the merit of determining and perfecting the work. . . .<sup>55</sup>

Mrs. Seton's letter to Father Cheverus was sent that very day. She had, indeed, only been awaiting Anthony's arrival from Boston "to go valiantly and boldly to the standard of the Catholics and trust all to God." And so, when he had returned and she had sent her letter to Father Cheverus, she soon put her resolution into effect. On February 27th, Ash Wednesday, she went to Mass at St. Peter's in New York. This she also did on some other days of early Lent. Then on March 10th or thereabouts, she received Father Cheverus' answer to her letter.

Anthony Filicchi, to whom it was sent, described the story thus:

Dear Sir,

I have duly received your kind favour of the 5th inst. and ran immediately to deliver the enclosed to our worthy Mrs. Wm. M. Seton. She accepted of it as of a distinguished blessing from God; she prayed, she meditated on it, and the happy result has been that enlightened and strengthened in the true faith by the Holy Ghost, she went the day before yesterday morning to our Church, where she had previously been several days at Mass, and having called on our Revd. Dr. O'Bryan, she formally abjured in my presence her past errors, and made the requisite profession of faith of the Roman Catholic Church. Be sure that she will be a pattern of piety, & zeal. Taught by me to put the proper value on your advices and spiritual direction, & sensible of your goodness from the manner in which you have been pleased to answer her first application, she will occasionally avail herself of the permission you grant her of addressing you; and to God, I know, you will look for reward of your trouble.<sup>56</sup>

Mrs. Seton herself wrote to Father Cheverus a letter of thanks on April 2nd. Thereafter she sought advice from the

<sup>55</sup> *Archives of the Sisters of Charity, Cincinnati* (kindness of Dr. Code, of the Catholic University, Washington).

<sup>56</sup> March 16, 1805. Copy from *Archives of the Sisters of Charity, Cincinnati*. Father Cheverus' letter to Mrs. Seton, of March 4, 1805, was first made public in *Life of Mother Elizabeth Boyle* (New York, 1893), p. 25.



two Boston priests, and, in turn, received from them many beautiful pieces of spiritual literature. It was through their interest that she also had access to the direction of Father Tisserant, after the latter went to New York. Father Cheverus recommended him to her as both learned and holy. Furthermore, the Boston priests were practically made her official advisers by Anthony Filicchi himself when he left this country. It was to them that she looked for a decision in her further plans. They advised against her idea of going to Canada; they approved of the removal to Baltimore, out of which finally came her great work for the Church in this country.<sup>57</sup>

One of the most interesting Boston converts was Dr. Stephen Cleveland Blyth, of Salem. This rather amazing person was born in Salem, on January 20, 1771, of an Episcopal family, and baptized in St. Peter's Episcopal Church there. During the Revolution, when the Episcopal churches were closed, the family attended the Congregational services. The young Stephen went to Phillips Andover, and then to Harvard, but did not graduate from the latter institution. He returned to Salem "to study physic," and then went to Charleston, South Carolina, where he set up a practice. Travel took him to the West Indies, France, and England. In the lastnamed country he investigated many forms of religion, the Moravian, Universalist, Swedenborgian, Quaker, Unitarian, and even the Mohammedan. After some years he returned to the West Indies on a medical mission and finally, because of health, he came back to Boston. That was in May, 1805. Having become somewhat interested in Catholicism in the West Indies, he went to the Catholic church here and addressed himself to Father Cheverus to answer inquiries. Recording this fact in his own words, Dr. Blyth wrote:

He received me with great kindness and introduced me to his colleague, the Rev. Dr. Matignon. I found in Mr. Cheverus a man of uncommon zeal and uncommon talents. He possessed the language of the country in perfection and thundered in

<sup>57</sup> A good introduction to the growing Seton literature is furnished by J. B. Code, *Elizabeth Seton* (New York, 1927).

it from the pulpit with the eloquence of a Paul. In Doctor Matignon, I discovered a man of equal zeal and extraordinary piety, mingled with the most captivating suavity of manners. They lived in habits of friendship with the principal inhabitants of Boston. . . . Mr. Cheverus put into my hands a little book of which I had long been in quest, Bossuet's *Exposition of the Catholic Faith*. . . . I read this work with attention and found it luminous and candid throughout. To this succeeded many other pieces of a similar description.

The Doctor removed to Salem, whence he continued his correspondence with Father Cheverus at intervals for four years. Afterwards he moved to Charlestown with the view of being near Father Cheverus and a Catholic place of worship. He finally made his first communion in the Church of the Holy Cross in Boston, at the feast of Pentecost, 1809, in which solemn ceremony he was joined by his family. He later went to Canada and set up practice at Boucherville, near Montreal, where he continued to live as a devout Catholic. Among other deeds to serve his faith, he published the story of his conversion, from which the above notes are taken.<sup>58</sup>

## VI

The missions outside Boston divide themselves easily into those of North and South. Both of them were further divided; the North into the mission of Maine and the mission in northern Massachusetts and New Hampshire; the South into the mission of Plymouth and the mission of Rhode Island.

### THE MISSION OF MAINE

Of these four missions that which showed the greatest development in the early 1800's was the mission of Maine.

From August 30, 1801, to January 31, 1802, there were thirty-two baptisms in Maine, divided as follows: in the County

<sup>58</sup> *An Apology for the Conversion of Stephen Cleveland Blyth to the . . . Catholic . . . Church* (New York: printed by Joseph Desnoues, no. 7 Murray Street, 1815). Copy in *St. John's Seminary Library*, Brighton.

of Lincoln, twenty-three, of whom eight were adults; in Portland, nine, of whom one was an adult.<sup>59</sup> Bishop Carroll visited this mission after his dedication of the Boston church, and confirmed some of its members. There are, however, no statistics about the congregation there at the time and, indeed, but few details of the Bishop's visit.

It is, however, known that in 1804 the Newcastle congregation numbered more than two hundred, of whom the majority were "converts from among all the sects, even the Quakers, who are the most difficult to bring over." These Catholics were, for the most part, dispersed at a distance of four, five, ten, fifteen, and even twenty miles from the little chapel at Newcastle, "but their fervor is such that they rarely miss Mass, even in the worst weather, when the priest is there." Even at that time they were planning to erect a new church.<sup>60</sup> In the autumn of 1805, Father Matignon went to Maine to arrange for a new phase in the care of the Newcastle mission. As one result of his visit, Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill made a present of three acres of land and five hundred dollars in cash for the purpose of a new church, to be erected the following summer. They decided on a brick church, 65 feet long at least and from 36 to 40 feet wide, the whole cost of which might be \$4000. Of this amount, some \$2070 had already been subscribed, including \$100 each from Fathers Matignon and Cheverus, the latter of whom also promised to donate to it all his offerings. Father Matignon considered that the subscription was "a great deal for a few separated Catholic families, half of whom are new converts," obliged themselves to contribute equally with Protestants to the building of meeting-houses and the salary of ministers." The eager pastor, when announcing this to the Bishop, tucked in also a request to apply to this purpose fifty dollars which he still had in hand for the Baltimore Cathedral. While at Newcastle he also had arranged for Father Romagné to pass the winter there.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> *Holy Cross Register*, p. 103. The *Newcastle Church Register* in the earliest book of the new church (*Portland Dioc. Arch.*) begins in 1808.

<sup>60</sup> Father Tisserant, *Annales de littérature*, etc.

<sup>61</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, from Newcastle, Oct. 10, 1805 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

Thus, the Newcastle congregation was served by a priest almost every Sunday. One of the truly remarkable events for them that winter was to see almost the whole Penobscot tribe of Indians arrive in town just before Father Romagné's visit. The townsfolk not only let the Indians stay until the priest's arrival, but also suffered them to remain all winter and were very kind to them. And it happened, almost as God's own history lesson, that the first person to be buried in the new Catholic cemetery of Newcastle was an Indian woman who died during the winter. This fact would serve as a perpetual reminder to the English-speaking Catholics of Maine that, under God, they owed to the Indians the presence of a priest among them.

Father Romagné apparently gave and received much consolation during his winter in Newcastle with the Kavanaghs<sup>62</sup> and prepared to spend the next winter there also. In 1806, Father Cheverus made his usual summer visit there, but at his own expense.<sup>63</sup>

About this time one of Kavanagh and Cottrill's vessels brought from Dublin, whether by order of the owners or by accident is not known, a large quantity of lime rock from Dublin. Mr. Kavanagh sent to Thomaston for lime burners, and from that rock was produced all the lime used in the building,<sup>64</sup> which was finally ready for dedication in July, 1808. Father Cheverus, authorized by Father Matignon as Vicar-General, performed the ceremony on Sunday, the 17th of July, 1808. On the same day, he also blessed the new cemetery.

The church was called St. Patrick's, which "seemed to gratify our friends here," Father Cheverus informed the Bishop; continuing, "I like it myself because it proclaims that our Church here is the work of Irish piety."

<sup>62</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 17, 1806. This letter is incorrectly filed in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.* under date of Feb. 17, 1800, 5 H 1. The deed of conveyance of the land for the Newcastle church was dated July 28, 1806, and recorded in *Lincoln Registry of Deeds*, book 63, p. 203. It granted to the Bishop the land on which the new church would stand and three acres of land around it, with the right of ingress and egress forever to a fine spring on an adjoining lot. See Edward Kavanagh to Bishop Fenwick, Feb. 18, 1832 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>63</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Nov. 25, 1806 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>64</sup> Edward Kavanagh to Bishop Fenwick, Feb. 18, 1832 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*).



The church was built of brick, fifty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth. The height inside from the floor to the highest part of the arched ceiling was thirty feet, and there were five arched windows fifteen feet high on each side. It was on the whole a very neat and elegant little chapel, and is still in use today, the oldest Catholic church in New England. The cemetery was walled all round and had a neat gate. A large cross was fixed in the middle.

Father Cheverus broached to the Bishop a new plan for the new parish. The people there, he wrote, wanted a resident priest; his own visits to the district would not be long, and Father Romagné did not wish to settle in Newcastle, as "He has in Passamaquoddy a house and a neat little farm 'round it and the State allows him \$350 per annum." An extra priest, therefore, was desired, and Father Cheverus hoped that one might be furnished from the six priests recently ordained at Baltimore. The Kavanagh family would furnish him board, lodging, washing, laundry, etc., and also a horse, and would insure the congregation's offer of two hundred dollars salary.

The congregation here being mostly composed of converts, and the country being overrun with Methodists, Baptists, etc., it is to be wished the priest could preach with facility, and I think it would be better, if the English language was his native tongue. . . .<sup>65</sup>

Father Matignon's comment on the hope for a new priest for Newcastle included the illuminating words:

He must fear neither cold nor fatigue, and he must content himself with what is strictly necessary. He will be recompensed for his privations by a healthy climate, the society of good people, and the hope of spreading the true religion.<sup>66</sup>

However, none of the newly ordained priests was available for New England. The mission in Maine continued to be

<sup>65</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Carroll, July 30, 1808 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); Edward Kavanagh to Bishop Fenwick, Feb. 18, 1832 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); *Register*, St. Patrick's Church (*Portland Dioc. Arch.*); *Independent Chronicle and Boston Gazette*, July 15, 1808.

<sup>66</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Aug. 11, 1808.

served by Father Romagné in the winter and by Father Cheverus in the summers. For example, in 1808, Father Cheverus spent there the time from mid-July to early October. During that period he visited not only Newcastle, but also Bristol, Hope, Warren, Jefferson, Pinhook, Edgcomb, and Ballestown, and probably Waldoboro. In 1809, he also spent July and August in Maine, repeating the same round. In 1810, however, it was Father Matignon who went to Maine for the summer. On the way back or forth, Father Cheverus always stopped at Portland. Father Romagné also probably stopped there on his annual visits to Boston.

#### THE MISSION STATIONS OF SALEM, NEWBURYPORT, AND PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The towns of Salem and Newburyport and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, made up the nearer half of the northern mission. The lastnamed place was, apparently, visited only at irregular times as occasion for baptism demanded, and this was but seldom, three or four times at the most during the decade 1801 to 1810. The other two places were established missions and enjoyed regular although not frequent priestly visits. Indeed, there is proof that Salem was visited by one or other or both of the Boston priests at least once a year during the whole decade 1801 to 1810. After the autumn of 1807, the Salem baptisms were all administered by Father Matignon. It happens that from the same date these baptisms show a notable increase in numbers. In the decade from 1797 up to 1807, there are records of seven baptisms in Salem; in the two years of 1808 and 1809, there were eleven baptisms there. This growth was in part due to the coming to Salem of a few new French and Irish families. One of these was the Simone family, who were resident there at the latest on September 4, 1808. Firmin Otignon and Prudence Lawrence, his wife, a non-Catholic, were also resident there at the same time; the wife was baptized the following year (May 6, 1809). Both families were very devout and hearty co-workers with the priest.

About the same time there came to Salem a certain Thomas Kennelly and his wife, Sarah. They also were very active in church matters. It is certain that in January, 1812, they had let their house on Herbert Street for the Catholic services.<sup>67</sup> Probably they had done the same even at an earlier date.<sup>68</sup> February 11, 1810, was the first Sunday that the Salem Catholics ever had the priest with them, and on this occasion the "good old Doctor," as Rev. Mr. Bentley called Father Matignon, "was beset by the leaders of the Freewill sect and they most grossly insulted the old gentleman. The Doctor refused to suffer any of his friends to interfere and expressed his pity at the ignorance and impudence of these intruders."<sup>69</sup> The year 1810 added eight baptisms to the roll of the church in Salem. The mission of that town was truly growing and would soon become a monthly station.

During this period, at Newburyport there is apparently no baptismal or marriage record after early 1806. It is certain, however, that several Catholic families still resided there, among them Mrs. Cutler and some of her children, and Dr. Vergnier. Both were in contact with Father Matignon as well as with Father Cheverus, who passed through the place twice each year.<sup>70</sup>

#### THE SOUTHERN MISSION: PLYMOUTH

To the south of Boston certain noticeable changes occurred during the years after the dedication of the church in the metropolis. The first of them is the apparent abandonment of the visits to Plymouth. From 1801 to 1810 neither the Baptismal nor the Marriage Register bears any indication that a priest visited the town. Given the history of the previous years, however, and the fact that other places to the south of Boston were visited, it seems reasonable to suppose that the Irish group at Plymouth and Carver was not neglected.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, IV, 81; cf. *Baptismal Register*, Nov. 12, 1809.

<sup>68</sup> Rev. Louis S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 19.

<sup>69</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, III, 501, and 495.

<sup>70</sup> Father Cheverus to Mrs. Seton, Jan. 28, 1806 (*Emmitsburg Arch.*); Boston *Baptismal Register*, II, 4.

<sup>71</sup> *Baptismal Register*, I. Indexed under name Columba Dwyer.

## THE SOUTHERN MISSION: RHODE ISLAND

These years witnessed a development in Rhode Island. Previously Father Thayer had visited Newport at least twice (1791 and 1798), ministering to the small group of French Catholics there, and to the family of Mr. Wiseman, the Spanish Consul. These and other Newport Catholics were later served by Father Tisserant. This priest was in Newport on August 14, 1802, where he had been called to baptize in the family of a certain John Nicholas Gibert.

Bishop Carroll also baptized in Newport. It happened that, as he was returning from the dedication of the Boston church, he was delayed by his boat's being windbound. He evidently used the time to look up some Catholics and, as a result, baptized two children in the family of Joseph Mehe.<sup>72</sup>

Father Tisserant's last known visit to Newport was in June, 1804, when he again baptized in Mr. Gibert's family. After his departure from New England (first for New Jersey and then for Europe), Father Tisserant was succeeded in the southern mission by Father Matignon. The latter's first visit to the section occurred in 1805, although he had intended to make a collecting visit there in July, 1802, to see Mr. Wiseman.<sup>73</sup> This intention he did not carry out — he went instead from New York to Boston by way of Hartford and Suffield.<sup>74</sup> However, from 1805 onward, Newport received an annual visit from the Boston pastor.

The families he served there were at first the French, who had emigrated from the West Indies (Guadeloupe), but in 1807 and thereafter, some Irish families. The names Baxter, Maloni, McDonald, Latham, and Gorman appear on the *Baptismal Register*. In 1806, a visit to Providence was made; the persons then baptized in that place were the children of Andrew Dillon and his wife Mary. In 1809, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, first appears on the Register and again for baptism in an Irish

<sup>72</sup> *Baptismal Register*.

<sup>73</sup> Letter to Mrs. Stoughton, July 15, 1802.

<sup>74</sup> See *Baptismal Register*, for Suffield.



family. In this town one meets the names Condon, Lawler, McGonagle, and Griffin.

In general, the evidence points to Father Matignon's having assumed the care of the Southern mission entirely, as he had that of Salem after 1807. Ten baptisms in the decade in Rhode Island marked a notable increase there; they showed a Catholic beginning in that State, especially in Providence.

## VII

In Boston itself, the courtesies that had long been extended to the Catholic priests as members of the clergy of the town were continued in the times now being described. One of the outstanding examples of this was the formal invitation to Fathers Matignon and Cheverus to attend the annual election dinner of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. Similar invitations would have been given them for the dinners of the Irish Charitable Society and the School Visitation. It is known that in 1806 both priests accepted the invitation of the Ancients. It is also known that Father Cheverus attended a public banquet in 1804. It is to be assumed that the Boston priests often accepted the invitations issued to them in other years as well. At the 1804 banquet, some two hundred guests were present, and one of the speakers, a guest from Baltimore, gave great praise to the work being done there by Father Du Bourg's College.<sup>75</sup>

Father Cheverus' biographer has made much of his presence at a certain public dinner (date unknown) at which President John Adams was the guest of honor, but there can be little doubt of the biographer's exaggeration when he declared that, next to the President, the priest had the seat of honor. Nothing in the known sources indicates that either he or Father Matignon was ever accorded more than the politeness customary on such occasions. Nevertheless, there was probably some foundation for the anecdote related in connection with the above-

<sup>75</sup> Father Tisserant's letter from Boston, Sept., 1804, in *Annales de littérature*, etc.

mentioned dinner. It is stated that Mr. Adams remarked to Father Cheverus, "What most astonishes me, on this occasion, is to see myself here and to see you here." Boston had been very much opposed to the election of Mr. Adams as President, just as it had, not long before, been opposed to the residence of a Catholic priest in its confines.<sup>76</sup>

Politically speaking, one may regard the Boston priests as sympathetic to the Federalist Party, although their congregation in general evidently were Democratic-Republicans. By 1805, Irish Catholics were becoming numerous enough to be specially sought by both parties. In that year, indeed, there was an Irish issue. After the Irish in Ireland were defeated in their struggle for independence in 1798, the British had felt it safe to bring on the project of the Union. In order, however, to carry it, the British Ministry, especially Pitt, wished at first to incorporate in the Act of Union a clause assuring Catholic emancipation. After the Union was carried, however, no Act of Emancipation was forthcoming, and a renewed demand for it in 1804 was rejected by the English Parliament.

In Boston, the so-called Democratic-Republicans tried to make political capital out of those events by playing up the claims of Irish Catholic Emancipation. In this they were represented as usual by the *Independent Chronicle*. The Federalists, on the other hand, fearing extreme measures anywhere and sincerely opposed to the extremes of French democracy, continued their policy of isolationism with an ill-concealed leaning to England. The *Columbian Centinel* was their organ. Samples of the political appeals of these two parties to the Boston Irish are found in the following newspaper items of August, 1805. The first is from *The Centinel*. Its main argument lay in the sentence: "If we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs, why can't they have the same right in England?" The article was signed "An American."<sup>77</sup>

In the following week, *The Chronicle* replied:

<sup>76</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 75 and note; see also *Daily Advertiser and Patriot*, Jan. 30, 1839.

<sup>77</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Aug. 3, 1805.

# FEDERALISTS VS. IRISH CATHOLICS

It appears a subject of great complaint in *The Centinel* that the Republicans commiserate the unhappy situation of the Catholics in Ireland. The federalists are so anxious to support the British in all their measures, that even the distresses of those long injured people are not to be mentioned, lest the humanity and honor of Pitt and his coadjutors should suffer in the estimation of the Catholic and benevolent. How depraved must be the mind of those, who can hear without emotions of sympathy, the gross impositions practised on that unfortunate section of the British empire! While we, in this country, enjoy the privileges of a free Constitution and the rights of conscience, we cannot but deplore the miserable state of millions in Ireland, who are deprived of those blessings, so essentially valuable in a state of civilized society. . . . The dissenters in England are generally as much bound in chains as the unfortunate Catholics. The Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, are all within the thralldom of an established hierarchy. . . .<sup>78</sup>

*The Chronicle* followed this up by a similar item on the 8th.<sup>79</sup> The Federalist rebuttal appeared in *The Palladium* for August 13th:

In *The Chronicle* of the 8th inst. there was an incendiary communication, calculated to create discontent among the respected Irish Catholics in the metropolis, and to induce them to join in opposition to those who have long and faithfully administered our State Government — the *Federal Republicans*. But is there one who believes the writer of that paragraph really wishes them any good — that he is friendly to the Roman Catholics? No — And they must be sensible — he insults them by his attempts to impose on and make them believe otherways. What has [his] party ever done to afford business to the Irish Catholics or to assist them to establish their Church? Nothing. Hypocritical words they are very liberal with; and if they make the impressions they intend, they laugh in their sleeves. On the other hand, let the Catholics consider who are

<sup>78</sup> *Independent Chronicle*, Aug. 5, 1805.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, 1805.

the Rulers in this State. Are they not *Federal Republicans*? Well, and do they not possess perfect religious liberty under them? They have long held the same power they do now; have they enacted one law against the Irish Catholics? *No* — nor never will. Did the Catholics find, when they were erecting their handsome house of worship, that Democrats were more liberal than Federalists in their subscriptions? There are few Federalists who will not join in the wish of "*Erin go bragh*," but they consider that the time and manner deserve serious consideration. On the other hand, there are many who affect to wish Ireland independent, that care nothing about its inhabitants. . . . It is the destruction of *England*, not the benefit of *Ireland* they wish. It is enmity to the former, not love to the latter that actuates them.<sup>80</sup>

In May and June, 1806, Father Cheverus took a prominent part in a sad event, which wakened a deep and intense public interest in the western part of Massachusetts. It had to do with the trial and execution of two Irish Catholics for murder and robbery.<sup>81</sup>

The crime with which they were charged was committed on November 9, 1805, at Wilbraham. On that day the dead body of a certain Marcus Lyon, of Woodstock, was found in Chicopee River. The coroner's inquest resulted in a verdict that he had been willfully murdered by two transient men, in sailors' clothes, who were seen passing through Springfield toward Connecticut on the evening of the day of the murder. These men were apprehended at Rye on the 12th. Both were Irish. One, named James Halligan, about twenty-seven years old, had resided for some years past in Hartford and in Boston; the other, named Dominic Daley, thirty-four, had come from Ireland only nine months before. It is known that Daley had a widowed mother, a wife, and a young child in Boston. The accused

<sup>80</sup> *New England Palladium*, Aug. 13, 1805.

<sup>81</sup> For this case, see *Report of the Trial of Daley and Halligan*, etc., by a Member of the Bar (Northampton, 1806); cf. *Hampshire Gazette*, Nov. 13, 20, 1805, and April 30, 1806; *Republican Spy*, Nov. 19, 1805, June 10, 1806; *Hampshire Federalist*, Jan. 7, April 22, 29, June 3, 10, 1806; *Massachusetts Spy*, Nov. 20, 1805, June 25, 1806; and *Independent Chronicle*, Nov. 21, 1805; cf. *Records of Supreme Judicial Court*, II, 35 ff.



were both committed to jail in Northampton and held for trial, which was set to take place before the Supreme Court at Northampton on April 22, 1806.<sup>82</sup>

The murderous assault, committed in daylight on the high road, supposedly by two tramps belonging to the class of the despised Irish foreigners, naturally aroused great excitement and even panic among the people. Indeed, so great was the public interest that the trial (April 24th) was vastly overcrowded, and had to be moved from the courthouse to the meeting-house. Even this larger place was filled to overflowing.<sup>83</sup> The trial lasted all day, beginning at 9 A.M. and ending with the jury's verdict of guilty, rendered shortly after 10 P.M. This verdict was based only on circumstantial evidence.

On Friday, April 25th, sentence of death was imposed by the presiding judge "in a very solemn and impressive manner." He reminded the condemned men that "they were soon, very soon, to appear before a tribunal, where not merely their actions, but their motives, would be scrutinized." According to one account of the trial, Daley seemed in some degree agitated and, immediately after sentence was pronounced, fell upon his knees, apparently in prayer; but Halligan, who previous to the trial was by many supposed much the less criminal, exhibited stronger marks of total insensibility, or obstinate and hardened wickedness, than is often witnessed.<sup>84</sup>

Father Cheverus' biographer wrote in a quite different manner. Evidently in this particular case depending on original documents, he stated that the two men were

resigned to the sentence of death passed upon them, and thinking only of preparing their souls for the awful passage to eternity, they wrote to Father Cheverus, to ask the consolations of

<sup>82</sup> The *Hampshire Federalist* of June 10, 1806, speaks of a brother of Daley's in Boston, and says that Daley was here for two years. The *Holy Cross Parish Records* show the presence here of a Malachy Daly, and a Michael Daly in 1797. Both were married and had children. There was also a Margaret Daily, buried in 1801. Other Daleys also are named in the parish records, but there is no mention of any Dominic Daley. The surname Halligan does not occur in the church books up to 1810.

<sup>83</sup> *First Parish, Northampton* (Northampton, 1878), p. 20.

<sup>84</sup> *Hampshire Federalist*, April 29, 1806.

his ministry on this trying occasion. *Their letter, which was found among the papers of the Cardinal, altho it shows them to have been uneducated men, proclaims them Christians full of faith. "We adore," they wrote, "the decrees of Providence. Although we are not guilty of the crime imputed to us, we have committed other sins, and to expiate them, we accept death with resignation. We are solicitous only about our salvation: it is in your hands: come to our assistance."* They also asked the priest to deliver the customary execution discourse. "It will be a painful task for you — but you will not refuse us this favor and reduce us to the necessity of listening, just before we die, to the voice of one who is not a Catholic."<sup>85</sup>

Father Cheverus hastened to Northampton to perform this affecting priestly service. Meanwhile, Dominic Daley's mother, Mrs. Ann Daley, of Boston, presented to the Governor a petition for her son's pardon. In this she represented

as well in behalf of the unhappy convict, his wife, and child, as herself, that the evidence offered in the trial was *not positive*; but merely circumstantial; that a child not fourteen years old was the principal witness. *Neither can your Excellency be unconscious of the strong prejudice prevailing among the Inhabitants of the interior against the common Irish people who have emigrated to the United States; and in the present case the public mind has been influenced in a great degree by conversations and newspaper publications which precluded the possibility of that impartiality of trial which the law contemplates; and further that the prisoner has ever been a good son, father and husband; and ever sustained the reputation of an honest man and a good subject.*<sup>86</sup>

The pardon was not granted.

At Northampton the sheriff appointed Pomeroy's Tavern (on lower Main Street) for Father Cheverus' residence while in town; but the tavern-keeper refused to receive the priest because of his wife's objections. This lady declared that she

<sup>85</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, pp. 84-85. See particularly the statement about the lawyer's ignorance and the translator's note.

<sup>86</sup> Petition of Ann Daley, May, 1806, in *Mass. Arch., Pardons not granted*, I, 1785-1814.

"would not have been able to sleep a wink under the same roof with a Catholic Priest." Father Cheverus was, however, received by Joseph Clark, a non-Catholic, then living at the lower end of Pleasant Street. It was afterwards said that

For his heretical act, Mr. Clark, although not excommunicated from the Church, was pretty severely censured by some of his brethren, and although within a few years from [that time] his wife died, [and] his house was struck by lightning . . . yet in all this he failed to recognize the hand of Providence chastizing him for his heresy.<sup>87</sup>

Father Cheverus spent much, if not all, of his time with the condemned men. He said Mass for them, probably in the jail, since he gave them Holy Communion. Under his care they prepared a final statement in which they protested their innocence. The statement concluded by thanking Father Cheverus "for his long and kind attention to us, as likewise every other friend that served us and comforted us during our long confinement."<sup>88</sup>

On the day of the execution, Father Cheverus delivered the sermon in the meeting-house in the presence of an overflow assembly. "The Priest occupied a pew in the front gallery, with the window out, so that a crowded house and a vast multitude outside (it was afterwards estimated at 15,000) could hear him."<sup>89</sup> In the *Hampshire Federalist* of June 10, 1806, Father Cheverus' sermon was described as "an appropriate and eloquent discourse . . . from 1 John 3, 15. *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*" His biographer stated that the speaker

felt himself animated with holy indignation against the curiosity which had attracted to that mournful scene such a crowd of spectators. "Orators," cried he in a loud and stern voice, "are usually flattered by having a numerous audience, but I am ashamed of the one now before me. . . . Are there then men to whom the death of their fellow men is a spectacle of pleas-

<sup>87</sup> Letter in *Hampshire Gazette*, Feb. 1, 1870; see also the same for April 27, July 6, July 20, Aug. 24, 1869; Feb. 1, 8, 1870.

<sup>88</sup> *Republican Spy*, June 10, 1806.

<sup>89</sup> Letter of L. W., a witness, published in *Hampshire Gazette*, July 6, 1869.

ure, and object of curiosity! . . . But you, especially, O women! What has induced you to come to this place? Is it to wipe away the cold damps of death that trickle down the faces of these unfortunates? Is it to experience the painful emotions which this scene ought to inspire? . . . No, it is not for this. It is to behold their anguish and to look upon it with tearless, eager and longing eyes. Ah, I blush for you; your eyes are full of murder. . . ."

It has been said that afterwards some Protestants of the town invited Father Cheverus to preach to them, which he actually did several times before his departure for Boston.<sup>90</sup>

The strong current of hostility, partly racial and partly religious, against which the Catholics of this State had to struggle is further illustrated by what may be called the *Anthology* incident. In February, 1807, the *Anthology Review* of Boston, published an anonymous article, directed unsympathetically, to say the least, against the ordinary beliefs of Catholics. It was written by John Lowell. The author, who had just returned from a trip to Italy, began by declaring his lack of prejudice, his motive of charity, and his method of simplicity, and completed his introduction by the paragraph:

To the Catholics, I think we owe no apology for the exposure of their failings. The bigoted intolerance and persecution which have marked the footsteps of the followers of the Papacy, from the burning of John Huss to the massacre of St. Bartholomew, give them but feeble claims on the liberality of Protestants, and the evident contempt for all other Christians who are denominated Infidels, which is still to be perceived at Rome, notwithstanding all their humiliations, give us a fair right to examine the grounds of their imaginary claim to superiority.

So he entered into the body of his exposition. First, he took up the matter of indulgences. On this he made several remarks, coming to the point: "As I understand it in plain English, they daily grant permissions, either general or more limited, to com-

<sup>90</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, pp. 87-88.



mit offences." His next main object was the exposure of the cult of relics, among which he named a relic of the True Cross, which practice he asserted is "the grossest idolatry, for it deserves no other name. . . ." <sup>91</sup>

On April 10, 1807, the members of the society which conducted *The Anthology Review* received from Father Cheverus "a communication in defense of Roman Catholics" which was accepted by them and published in their April issue.<sup>92</sup> He wrote:

I am a Roman Catholick, and in points of doctrine perfectly agree with my brethren in Italy and elsewhere; but neither they nor I hold such a doctrine concerning indulgences and persecution, as you attribute to us in your letter.

Where did you read, sir, from whom did you ever hear, that indulgences are permissions to commit offences? Not, I am sure, in any catholick writer, not from any member of our church. Had you asked even the ignorant beggars you met with at Loretto and in other places, whether indulgences authorized them to get drunk, steal, &c. &c., they would have looked at you with astonishment, and perhaps then mistaken a *christian* for an infidel.

We ourselves publish indulgences in our church in Boston; and if indulgences are *permissions to commit offences*, let our church be pulled down, and every Roman catholick be banished from this hospitable land. But, I dare say, sir, you do us the justice to believe, that instead of encouraging crimes, we do our best to prevent them, and with the blessing of God, not unsuccessfully. If I am not misinformed, the American Traveller's respectable name is inscribed among the benefactors of our church in this town; I acknowledge it with pleasure and gratitude, and feel happy in assuring you that you have not contributed to the establishment of a school of corruption and idolatry.

Your venerable forefathers fled not from a *popish*, but from a *protestant* persecution. They landed here, and were at full liberty to show what was the spirit of their sect. Was it toler-

<sup>91</sup> *The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review*, IV, 1807, pp. 71-77.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 177-190; cf. *Proceedings, Mass. Hist. Soc.*, II, 160-169.

ation? Many other virtues they possessed, no doubt; but to this they were utter strangers.

Lord Baltimore, himself a Roman catholic, as well as his companions, fled from the same persecution. See them establishing themselves in Maryland: they will no doubt give strong specimens of popish bigotry and persecution. They opened an asylum, afforded protection, and granted the same civil privileges to christians of every denomination.

Here are my evidences. Judge of them yourself, sir, and give your decision. I am willing to abide by it.

I know, sir, that the children here have not inherited the persecuting spirit of their fathers. Our church in this town is a standing monument of their liberal and friendly dispositions; and the one who addresses you is proud of the friendship, and grateful for the polite attentions of several of them.

We Roman Catholics cherish a sincere affection for this country and its inhabitants; we abhor the idea of *being licensed* to commit crimes; and instead of hating our brethren on account of their religious opinions, we wish only to be able to do them every service in our power.<sup>93</sup>

The editor of *The Review*, Dr. Kirkland, added certain notes to Father Cheverus' article, by way of explanation and rejoinder. These follow:

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

Although it is contrary to the general rules which we have prescribed to ourselves to admit controversial discussions . . . yet, as the letter from a Roman Catholic is written in a liberal and gentlemanly style, and as the author of the letters, which he attacks, is perfectly willing that an explanation should take place, we think proper in *this instance* to depart from our general rule, most devoutly wishing that it may be the end of the controversy.

In justice however to our correspondent, whose letters we are publishing, and at his request, we add that he is happy to find so respectable a Roman Catholic denying that indulgences, either in their origin or in their abuse, have ever been

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 177-190.

applied to the encouragement of crimes, by affording *cheap* and *certain* modes of obtaining remission of sins, and that he feels fully convinced that the personal character of the gentlemen, at the head of the Catholick establishment in Boston, is a sufficient pledge that no such misapplication of the power will ever take place here.

But the editor then attempted to justify Mr. Lowell's position by quoting from the article "Indulgences" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He also explained Protestants' persecuting by their having imitated

the very bad example of the ancient Catholicks. With respect to the catholicks in this country, though it might be thought a little ridiculous in them to boast of their not exhibiting *here* a spirit of persecution, yet we are authorized by the author of the letters from Italy to declare that he has the highest respect for the learned, pious, and respectable gentlemen, at the head of that church in Boston; that he is convinced of the utility and importance of their labours, and that he is sorry that any free and general remarks, applicable to certain abuses in the church of Rome, should be thought by them to bear, in the smallest degree, upon the opinions and principles of men, whom he wishes to believe incapable of countenancing all the errors and absurdities, which have crept into the practice of the catholicks in some countries.<sup>94</sup>

Father Cheverus thereupon wrote to the society:

Sir:

No man is more averse to controversy than I am myself & I would really be sorry to find in your monthly publication nothing but a bunch of controversial thorns & nettles, instead of a fragrant nosegay of literary flowers which the title promises & the contents generally afford. I think however I must say a few words about your note, but I do not request you should publish them. They are only addressed to you & to the American Traveller at whose request you published the reflections contained in your note.

To know the doctrine of our Church, the books which she

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 223-224 (April number).

approves must be quoted. I know that the British encyclopedia & many other works pass condemnation against us. But I appeal from their judgment to your own candour, if you will but examine my witnesses. Two of them I take the liberty to send. Examine & cross-examine them, if you have leisure & patience.

I did not boast of our moderation here; this certainly would be ridiculous. I acknowledged with gratitude the liberality we have experienced in Boston. I spoke of Maryland where certainly Lord Baltimore & his R. Catholic friends had the authority in their hands. I certainly believe whatever our Church has decided as an article of faith; how far this extends Bossuet's exposition will inform you. As a Catholic I am not obliged either to believe or to defend any thing farther.

I beg of you, Sir, & of the American Traveller to receive my thanks for the very polite, though in regard to myself very undeserved, manner in which you speak of my venerable colleague & myself. Wishing that every controversy may be carried on & terminate in as friendly a manner as ours

I remain Sir . . .

At a meeting of the society, held on May 21, 1807, this letter from Father Cheverus was read and "Mr. Shaw [was] authorized to correspond with him on the subject; but to avoid any further notice of the controversy in *The Anthology*, unless desired by Mr. C." <sup>95</sup>

In early October, 1808, news came to Boston from Bishop Carroll that on April 8, 1808, the Holy See had made an important change in the organization of the American Church. By the brief, *Ex debito pastoralis officii*, Pope Pius VII divided the Diocese of Baltimore, and made four new dioceses, of which Boston was one. At the same time he raised Baltimore to the dignity of an Archdiocese.<sup>96</sup> This news coincided with the ending of that growth of the church here which marked the preceding decade. Hardly two months before the news of the

<sup>95</sup> *Anthology Society: Journal of the Proceedings . . . with an Introduction by Mr. A. DeWolfe Howe* (Boston, 1910). See especially pp. 111 ff.

<sup>96</sup> *Ex debito pastoralis officii* (Baltimore Dioc. Arch., Spec. B P 2; copy in Boston Dioc. Arch.).



ecclesiastical reorganization arrived here, Father Matignon had written Bishop Carroll that the Boston church was showing very little, if any, increase. The regular annual growth was about balanced by the losses, for as the town itself suffered a gradually mounting stagnation of all commerce, due to the European wars, its residents were obliged to remove to other places to gain a livelihood.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Bishop Carroll learned of Rome's changes for America on Sept. 25, 1808. *Amer. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XV (1898), 130; *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, II (1916-1917), 28; Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Aug. 11, 1808.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DIOCESE OF BOSTON: THE FIRST YEARS (1808-1815)

IN ACCORDANCE with Bishop Carroll's nomination, Father Cheverus was appointed by the Pope as Bishop of the new Diocese of Boston.<sup>1</sup> From the very beginning of his episcopate the new Bishop's burden was made heavier by the Embargo of 1807, and then by the War of 1812-1815, with their grave injury to Boston's trade and prosperity. The young prelate was to find a blight threatening to blacken all the promised bloom of the carefully nurtured past. The Catholics, adversely affected in their very means of livelihood, and obliged, many of them, to seek jobs in other scattered places, were unable to carry on their work for the advance of religion. Their poverty added its quota of obstacles to ecclesiastical vocations and to the matter of a Catholic school and college in the new diocese.

The war also interrupted here the apparent beginnings of a Catholic literary movement. On the other hand, it also occasioned the expansion of an organized Catholic charity movement in the parish and gave opportunity for a remarkable manifestation of Catholic patriotism. Outside the town the war served to undermine the progress of the Catholic mission in Maine; it frustrated the attempted expansion of the mission in Salem and impeded the initiation of a new phase of the Southern mission.

Intercourse with Canada became extremely difficult, and with Europe, and therefore Rome, almost impossible. In addition, Napoleon's decree of May 17, 1809, by which the Pope's temporal sovereignty was abolished, and his action of imprisoning the Holy Father's person added immensely to the difficulties of American Catholics generally. The new Boston prelate would start his episcopate with many crosses.

<sup>1</sup> *Dilecto Filio*, April 8, 1808 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, Spec. B P 11; copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

## I

The first one was prepared even before his nomination to the see, for this nomination was made because Father Matignon had twice refused even to consider accepting the office of bishop himself. That refusal went as far back as 1804.

When Bishop Carroll was in Boston to dedicate the new Church of the Holy Cross in 1803, he told the priests there that "he had asked Rome to divide his immense diocese." By mid-year 1804, it was known in Boston that he "had received all the authorization necessary for this division; that his own see of Baltimore would be made an archdiocese; that he could erect as many [suffragan] sees as he deemed necessary, fix them where he wished, and choose the Bishops to fill them." The author of this statement went on to say:

I know that Father Matignon is designated for one of the new Bishops; but I doubt that they can get him to accept, for, together with other qualities of apostolic men, he has besides the same fear they had of the burden of the episcopate. I hope, nevertheless, that he will be forced to it, and thus will have the means to increase still more and to multiply the services which he renders to the Church. Would that there were more ecclesiastics like him in the United States! Let us pray God to raise them up, let us hope for them, and then it could be said, I believe: "All who saw them recognized them as the seed which the Lord has blessed." <sup>2</sup>

The news of Bishop Carroll's plan to make New England a diocese and to name Father Matignon its bishop had come to Boston through Mr. Barry, one of Bishop Carroll's friends, who was in Boston in September, 1804. What he said there was partly confirmed by a letter from the Bishop himself, received about the same time. In this, Bishop Carroll spoke of the division of the Diocese and asked Father Matignon's advice about the place of the State of Vermont in the new organization. The Boston pastor's reply was to the effect that dividing the Diocese

<sup>2</sup> Father Tisserant, *Annales de littérature*, etc.

of Baltimore would bring very little or no gain for religion. As regarded Vermont, he declared, its Catholic future should decide whether it ought to be included in the District of New England or in that of New York. For the present, however, and for many years to come, not only the State of Vermont, he felt, but that of Massachusetts also, could only make part of the Diocese of New York. He then continued:

A Bishop presupposes a clergy, a sufficient number of parishes to supervise, ordinations to perform, some provisions for episcopal expenses, etc. The clergy of Massachusetts is reduced to three priests, Father Tisserant not regarding himself as fixed here. All the Catholics together amount to 1200 souls; there is no permanent fund either probable or possible. It would be impossible for us to support or to assign work to any outside priest on whom you would confer this dignity. Father Cheverus, I feel sure, would not accept it in the present circumstances. As for myself, the proposition, if it was serious, would make me flee to the other end of the world.

I even dare to conjure you, if only for the honor of the episcopal dignity, to put a peremptory end to some rumors which have been spread on this subject. When I compare them with what I am, they humiliate and mortify me more than I can tell you. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Carroll himself recognized that his plan was "rather premature, considering the [small] number of clergymen and the means of support for the different Bishops." But he also thought that "probably a multiplication of dioceses may be the means of multiplying priests." In late 1806, he again informed Rome that four new dioceses, at least, should be created in his territory; of these, one should be Boston, which should have jurisdiction over New England, including Vermont.<sup>4</sup> As for the bishop of this new see, he still recommended Father Matignon, "outstanding as regards age, maturity, and longer residence

<sup>3</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, Nov. 12, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 13).

<sup>4</sup> Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, p. 580.



here, but [he added] I am afraid that he would rather leave America than accept the Episcopate." He then mentioned, as the only other possibility, Father Cheverus, whom he described as "an excellent preacher, beloved of everybody, and [a priest who] with wonderful ability and facility brings many persons into the fold of the Church." <sup>5</sup>

Rumors of the Bishop's recommendation soon reached Father Matignon's ears, and brought from him the following admirable letter to Bishop Carroll:

Boston, April 6, 1807

My Lord,

Advices that I received at the same time from Baltimore and New York compel me to address to you humble but strong representation on a subject of the greatest importance for you, for me, and for the good of religion. Can it be, my lord, that you seriously think of me for one of your future suffragans? I am thoroughly convinced that if the distance that I have always lived from you had not made it an impossibility for you to know me, you would never have thought of such a choice. Consequently it is my duty to make myself known to you, without any affectation of humility, but with the same impartiality as I would speak to you about another. The good that has been done here is nearly exclusively the work of Mr. Cheverus; he it is who occupies the pulpit, who is oftenest in the confessional, and who is my counsellor in all that is to be done. For a long time his aversion to have himself known abroad has often caused us to be identified one with the other, and occasionally I have received compliments which in all justice were due to him. At present, in spite of his love for self-concealment, he is known; and probably, with the exception of himself alone, in the estimation of everybody else, I have, as I deserve, but second place. My memory is actually so weakened and so little to be trusted that within twenty-four hours I am apt to forget the names and the features of persons who have business with me, and what they tell me and have told me, which, as has several times happened, forces me to avoid all society for fear of thus putting myself in a ridiculous

<sup>5</sup> *Letter-Book*, I, 73 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

position, which also causes me even more embarrassment in the confessional. The same defective memory hampers me in recalling words that for some years were most familiar to me and at times compels me to stop short in the midst of a sentence. I experience the greatest difficulty in composing the simplest exhortation, and the growing weakness of my sight makes reading very painful to me, if it be something I have composed or copied; so that in seven months I have mounted to the pulpit but once. I am not used to write even a simple letter in English, and I doubt if I could do even that without submitting it to a critic. Finally, I am at present almost incapable of undergoing fatigue, even of a short journey. Exposure to an east wind is enough to give me painful attacks of rheumatism which have made me very ill at various times during the past two years. I am very far, my lord, from wishing to direct or even to influence your choice. But I cannot help saying that if you have decided to choose one of your suffragans from Boston, were this to be in open competition, there is not a single Catholic or Protestant here of either good or little judgment who would not name my confrère. If he knew that I am telling you this he would not thank me, for he is far from having any ambition for the place. But the same motive of conscientiousness which would imperiously command me to refuse it, should dictate to him its acceptance. If in fine you wish, my lord, one who unites several characteristic traits such as you yourself possess, especially the precious gift of gaining hearts without failing to inspire respect, I can assure you that he possesses them in an eminent degree. The title of Doctor of Theology which is the one advantage I have over him cannot assuredly supply for the lack of all virtue. As for the rest, I am far from desiring that this dignity should fall on him, since naturally therefrom would result more frequent absences, which for me are a great trial, especially as regards preaching. It is undoubtedly useless for me to forecast the consequences of a pleasantry I have often indulged in with him by calling him a Jansenist, merely because he spent three years of his seminary course under the Oratorians, a joke to which he lent himself good-humoredly. His sentiments, finally, when he is serious, are exactly the same as mine; he labours heart and soul in fostering frequent Communion, and in his

sermons has often adroitly eulogized both the founder and the society whose missionaries have done such great things. I might, perhaps, have still more forcible things to tell you about my incapacity and absolute unfitness for the dignity of which there is question; but what has been said above ought certainly to suffice to induce you to deny the rumours, which could not be but injurious to the episcopate, and which really torment and afflict me. It seems to me that this dignity would lose much of its lustre if it were said that it was conferred upon another only after my refusal of it. You will certainly not thus imperil it, my lord, if you have the goodness to reflect seriously on the contents of this letter, or even to consult the wisest and most zealous person of this city.<sup>6</sup>

In the draft of Bishop Carroll's final letter to Rome on this subject, he took account of these statements of Father Matignon. But he prefaced them by some words on the other side. Father Matignon, he repeated,

is deserving of all praise for the good deeds which he has performed for the Catholic religion in these parts of this diocese; for his signal virtues, his well-trying character, his eminent learning, his diligence, his industry in building a beautiful church, and his conspicuous prudence in moderating men's various natural propensities. If the Holy Father and the Sacred Congregation see fit to accept the objections of this excellent man, who for no reason of self-indulgence but out of a conviction of bodily infirmity refuses to take the burden, there is no one else to think of than the aforesaid John Cheverus. He is not only in the flower of age and health to undertake any labor whatsoever, but enjoys the highest esteem among all people because of his indefatigable zeal, his incredible facility and success in preaching, and his personality, by which he marvelously draws people, Catholics and non-Catholics, to himself and, at the same time, to the practice of piety and the setting aside of prejudice against the Church. I am also further induced to recommend him because he will be most ac-

<sup>6</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, April 6, 1807 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 317).

ceptable to the Reverend Doctor Matignon, to whom he evidently stands in place of a son.<sup>7</sup>

Father Cheverus was, therefore, appointed by the Holy See first Bishop of Boston. At the same time the other new sees were filled. Bishop Carroll's nominees were appointed for Philadelphia and Bardstown, Kentucky; and the Pope personally appointed Father Concanen, an Irish Dominican living at Rome, as the new bishop of New York.

International difficulties prevented the new ecclesiastical order in the United States from being immediately set up. The official papers were put in the hands of Bishop Concanen, who could obtain no passage from Italy and who indeed never left there. He finally died in Naples, awaiting a passage to this country. The actual consecration of the new American bishops took place only by virtue of official copies of the originals, and then more than two years after the appointments.

When in early October, 1808, the first news of Father Cheverus' appointment reached Boston, he himself was both surprised and grieved. His first biographer declares that he complained bitterly to Bishop Carroll, saying that this was not what he expected from his kindness, and that the office of bishop, especially in America, was so weighty a burden that it ought not to have been imposed on him without ascertaining his views in regard to it.<sup>8</sup> He still hoped to remain as he was, and that Boston would be placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of New York. "This appears to me the best plan for the present and for many years to come, and if there must be a Bishop in Boston, I ought not to be the man."<sup>9</sup>

Even up to the 26th of June, 1810, Bishop-elect Cheverus had no word from Baltimore about his consecration. The latest

<sup>7</sup> Bishop Carroll, *Letter-Book*, I, 79, dated June 17, 1807 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*). At this same time Bishop Carroll recommended him as temporary administrator for the Diocese of New York because of the lack of a suitable priest there to assume the episcopate.

<sup>8</sup> Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Father Cheverus to Mrs. Seton, April 13, 1809 (*Emmitsburg Arch.*); cf. also Code, *Elizabeth Seton*, pp. 236 f.



word he had received about the matter came from Monsignor Flaget, Bishop-elect of Bardstown, and was dated Paris, March 29, 1810. The latter expected to sail for America in May and have Bishop Concanen as companion.<sup>10</sup>

As a matter of fact, Dr. Flaget arrived in Baltimore on August 7th, without the Bishop of New York. He brought authentic copies of the official papers, but Bishop Carroll would not proceed to the consecrations, feeling that he ought to await Bishop Concanen's anticipated arrival with the originals. Then came word of the latter's death in Naples.<sup>11</sup>

## II

Toward the 20th of September, Bishop Cheverus received a letter from Archbishop Carroll about the arrangements for the consecrations in Baltimore, and thus was finally able to complete his own plans and inform the Archbishop about them. He also wrote to Father Du Bourg on October 2nd, and told him that on the 15th or a few days later, Father Romagné would be in Boston to replace him in his absence, and that he himself would arrive in Baltimore on the 23rd, and thus have time for a week's retreat before All Saints'. "Pray for me, my worthy friend, and beg your holy colleagues to pray for me," he wrote. "In any other circumstances, it would be a veritable holiday for me to spend some time among you, but the reason for which I am now going gives me more uneasiness than I can tell you."<sup>12</sup>

On October 23rd, Bishop Cheverus did arrive at the Baltimore Seminary, where he found Bishop Egan, of Philadelphia, already installed, and where he was joined on the next day by Bishop Flaget. The former was consecrated in the Pro-cathedral on October 28th. The Bishop of Boston was consecrated in the same church on November 1st. The full ceremonial with three consecrating prelates was carried out, and an eloquent sermon

<sup>10</sup> Father Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, June 26, 1810 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>11</sup> Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Sept. 2, 1810 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal); Rev. L. S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 18; V. O'Daniel, "Concanen's Election," in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, II (1916-1917), 41.

<sup>12</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Du Bourg, Oct. 2, 1810 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

on the place of bishops in the Church was preached by the Dominican Father William Harold.<sup>13</sup>

After the ceremony there was a grand dinner served at the College, and attended by all the four bishops. Bishop Cheverus assisted and also preached at the consecration of Bishop Flaget, held on the 4th at the Church at Fell's Point. On Sunday, the 11th, he celebrated High Mass there. He left the city on the 19th.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, the new bishops and the Archbishop with his Coadjutor had conferred on "the state of the churches under their care, but not being able to extend their enquiries and collect full information concerning many points which require uniform regulation and perhaps amendment, they reserved to a future occasion, a general review," and published at that time only a few of the decisions they arrived at.<sup>15</sup>

On November 15, 1810, the Bishops likewise promulgated a solemn protest against the captivity of the Pope, and ordered the prayer for the Pope to be said by all priests at every Mass, and Psalm 120, and the same prayer in English on Sundays and feast days.<sup>16</sup>

On his journey home, Bishop Cheverus went out of his way to pass through Emmitsburg and visit that friend and spiritual daughter whom he had known so long by letter. Little is known of Bishop Cheverus' and Mother Seton's first meeting, but the following letter, which the holy nun wrote to a friend in New York sufficiently indicates its character:

My own dear Eliza,

It will please you to see our blessed Cheverus, because he carried your friend and the darlings in his very heart, and we love him with a sentiment not easily described, but which *you* may very well imagine, who can conceive what kind of ideas we attach to him [as a Bishop] independently of his uncom-

<sup>13</sup> Printed for Bernard Dornin. Copy in *St. John's Seminary Library*.

<sup>14</sup> F. Tessier, *Journal* (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*); *New England Palladium*, Nov. 16, 1810.

<sup>15</sup> Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 589 ff.

<sup>16</sup> For the documents on this matter, see Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 594 ff.

monly amiable manners and his being the most *cher confrère* of our valued Mr. Tisserant, who has the advantage exteriorly, but not in the *spirit of the mind*. Look at his purple ring [a sapphire] and reflect how often we kissed it, and if you have the happiness to hear him preach you will participate in the consolation I have greatly wished you to enjoy. . . .<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Cheverus arrived in Boston December 19, 1810.<sup>18</sup> He was installed on Sunday, the 22nd, and officiated on the happy festival of Christmas. How welcome this was to his dear children, and to his esteemed friend and colleague, need not be told!<sup>19</sup>

### III

The first years of Bishop Cheverus' episcopate, dating even from the time of his election, were passed in the shadows of war, first in Europe and then in America. President Jefferson's non-intercourse policy, begun in 1807, had already occasioned a great decline in Boston's commercial interests and brought a mounting poverty and suffering among the people. Besides economic stress, national enmities and bitterness were widespread. Bishop Carroll set forth his view of the American mind of that day in these words:

The unwise and impolite conduct of [the British] government gave a handle to many anti-British Americans to inflame the passions of the country against [Britain]; in which they are too successfully seconded by the numerous Irish emigrants, who bring hither with them all the prejudice and violence excited by the past and recent most iniquitous tyranny towards them; these are kept alive by some rancorous editors of newspapers, tho' in this country these emigrants have no cause to

<sup>17</sup> Mother Seton to Mrs. Sadler, of New York, Nov. 21, 1810, in Robert Seton, *Memoir of Elizabeth Seton* (2 vols.: New York, 1869), II, 105. Cf. also Sr. M. A. McCann, *History of Mother Seton's Daughters* (3 vols.: Longman's, 1917-1923), I, 38.

<sup>18</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Dec. 20, 1810.

<sup>19</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Mrs. Seton, Jan. 4, 1811 (*Emmitsburg Arch.*); Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis, Dec. 27, 1810 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

disturb our peace by the diffusion of their sentiments. . . .  
 [The] headstrong Irish amongst us . . . deserve sympathy, for  
 they have been goaded by their sufferings into madness. . . .<sup>20</sup>

Even before the outbreak of the war which followed, the Church in Boston felt the adverse effects of this situation. From the beginning of 1808 to the end of 1809, some twenty pews were returned to the church, and the sum of \$812.32 given back to their owners. The church suffered a net loss of at least \$150 in this, for during the same period twenty pews were sold by the church and brought in only \$660. For the year 1809 alone, the deficit between ordinary church income and outgo was \$205. An extraordinary collection for the expenses of the church in 1808 amounted to \$253.50; a similar collection in 1809 totaled \$191.72.

It was in this period of incipient hard times that the church incurred certain extraordinary expenses to prepare for the consecration of its new Bishop. Long before the last news of its actual date, the Bishop-elect had accepted the office, and the pastor at Boston had been making arrangements for the new situation. In the spring the sanctuary of the church was thoroughly cleansed and refinished, a new pulpit and the Bishop's seat were built and decorated, and finally five hundred dollars was given to the new Bishop for his outfit and his traveling expenses.

The church collection in 1811 amounted to \$134.07; that for 1812 totaled \$151.40. In September, 1812, after the Bishop's return from Maine, Father Matthew O'Brien, who had come here in May to help out, was so embarrassed by the straitened circumstances in the Boston priests' house that he went back to New York. He reported to Archbishop Carroll:

As my most worthy friends will not make any pecuniary stipulations for my board, I feel hurt at living at others' expense. The good and charming Bishop told me often, and indeed on the morning I left Boston, that when all the bread and meat was exhausted, he would take his Crozier and walk with Dr.

<sup>20</sup> Bishop Carroll to Father Plowden, Sept. 19, 1809, cited in Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 805 f.



Matignon in procession to the Almshouse. They are Apostles and Gentlemen.<sup>21</sup>

The same Father O'Brien, writing to the Archbishop on January 5, 1813, expresses the fear that he has eaten Bishop Cheverus and Dr. Matignon

out of home and house . . . though they are abundantly generous and never complain of wanting. The more indeed I consider their circumstances, the greater is my astonishment; like Anthony and Paul, they had one loaf already, but another half has been added in favour of me. I know not whence it comes. And nothing is wanting on their side to spread happiness about them. . . .<sup>22</sup>

The Bishop himself confirmed Father O'Brien's description when he himself wrote the Archbishop, giving his financial difficulties as a reason for absenting himself from the proposed Bishops' meeting in Baltimore in 1812.

Were I to complain of my poverty [he said] I would be wrong and ungrateful, but many of our poor people have no employment, and all feel the distress of the times, without excepting my good friends, Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill, who have met with heavy and repeated losses. I really do not know, at present one of my diocesans, to whom I could apply with a good grace even for ten dollars. The dear Dr. Matignon and myself have but one purse, but it is now an empty one. However, we live from day to day, and a kind providence supplies our daily wants.<sup>23</sup>

In early 1814, the Boston prelate had no different tale to tell. The hardness of the times had obliged many Boston Catholics to go elsewhere in search of a living, and their absence was "but scantily supplied" by some few poor people who were now and then added to the church. He ended this story to the Archbishop with the words,

We are in this town very gloomy and poor, our only comfort is to forget home and look abroad. We smile with hope and

<sup>21</sup> Father Matthew O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, Sept. 16, 1812 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 V 9).

<sup>22</sup> Father Matthew O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, Jan. 5, 1813 (*ibid.*, 5 V 10).

<sup>23</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Aug. 31, 1812 (*ibid.*, 2 O 8).

feel some joy in beholding the wonderful and happy events, which have taken place in Europe.<sup>24</sup>

The Boston prelate himself was deprived of news of his own family in France for at least two years (1813-1814), although he had received two hundred dollars (eleven hundred livres) from his brother during that period. This gift, he told his brother, had been of real service to him.

The unhappy war into which we have been plunged has changed our flourishing cities into poorhouses. Unless the good God gives us peace, the commerce which was our sole means of existence is destroyed. . . . But do not worry about me. Although poor, I don't lack any necessary; I am not in debt, and I am satisfied. . . .<sup>25</sup>

#### IV

The Papal Bull which gave Bishop Cheverus charge of the Diocese of Boston ordered him "to provide a body of clergy devoted to divine worship and the service of the diocese, and to erect a diocesan seminary either in the cathedral city or some other place as he thinks most expedient." The new Bishop took that injunction to heart immediately. Even before he was actually consecrated, he made a move in the direction of executing it which was in several ways remarkable. He persuaded the Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill to allow him to change the school which their sons were attending. Although the boys were prepared as late as September 2, 1810, to return to Montreal, the Bishop, after consulting with Archbishop Carroll, had them transferred to Georgetown. He also sent to Georgetown with them another Boston seminarian named John Ward, of whom mention was made in the previous chapter.

When the Bishop was in Georgetown after his consecration, he visited his three young aspirants. Unfortunately, he found

<sup>24</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, March 18, 1814 (*ibid.*).

<sup>25</sup> Bishop Cheverus to his brother, Jan. 22, 1815 (*Private Archives of M. de Plinval*; copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

them extremely dissatisfied with conditions there, and he wrote to Archbishop Carroll about the matter. He said that things at Georgetown "did not appear to me as I would have wished," and asked the Archbishop to visit the boys when he went to Washington. "Your condescension will encourage them to speak to you as to a Father." The Bishop hoped that they would soon be better pleased with their situation.

On his way back to Boston, the Bishop visited New York, where he gave Confirmation to more than four hundred people, and afterwards addressed them in both French and English. During the period of more than a week which he spent there, he was much edified by what he saw and heard. He met Fathers Kohlmann and Fenwick, and the other members of the Jesuit community with that admirable mixture of amiability and piety which soon led to very frank conversations among them. In one of these the Bishop invited the Jesuits to open a boarding-school in Boston. He was evidently enthusiastic about their prosperous Literary Institute in New York.

One of the New York Jesuits, referring some time later to the Boston invitation, said that it was "a pressing invitation" and offered "on their own terms." They had been unable to accept for want of a staff, although Boston would have suited them admirably, "because of its close relations with New York." This Jesuit felt that if the Society had more priests "there was no State in the Union where [the authorities] would not have solicited us and with hands joined; and I doubt not, that they would bear the expenses of the building [for a College] which is what we are offered at Boston."<sup>26</sup>

The school which the Bishop had in mind was intended, in the first place, for young levites. At the time when he was consecrated, he looked with joyful hope on four aspirants to the priesthood. Edward Barton was studying Theology at St. Mary's, Baltimore, Edward Kavanagh and John Cottrill and John Ward were at Georgetown. Besides them, Michael White was a Jesuit scholastic, teaching in the college at New York. That joy, however, soon began to be diminished.

<sup>26</sup> Father Malou to the General, Nov. 20, 1811 (*Fordham Arch.*, 203 H 7).

In 1811, White left the Jesuits. That same year Edward Barton left the Seminary to study medicine at Dartmouth; and John Cottrill, who was ready to enter the Seminary, was not allowed to do so, for his father decided to make a merchant of him. The young Ward also evidently discontinued his studies.<sup>27</sup>

Only Edward Kavanagh, who entered St. Mary's Seminary that fall, and his young brother, Samuel, who went to the college at Emmitsburg, were left to continue their studies. And they might well have persevered had it not been for the war. Edward received tonsure on April 24, 1813, but he did not return to the Seminary the next fall.<sup>28</sup> He and his brother Samuel spent the winter in the priests' house at Boston, and were tutored by Father Matignon.

They were still there on March 18, 1814, by which date the elder Kavanagh had, by friendly and mutual agreement, dissolved partnership with Mr. Cottrill. He wanted his boys to go home that spring, for the hard times rendered him unwilling and partly unable to spend much for their education. "It will be next to a miracle," the Bishop wrote, "if Edward perseveres in his vocation."<sup>29</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Edward himself wrote to the rector of the Baltimore Seminary, expressing his thanks for the Seminary's benefits to him and throwing a little more light on his situation and character. He had had his heart set on the Seminary and was disappointed at not returning, but, as he said, "having the happiness of remaining this winter in the company of my Reverend Pastor, my disappointment has been, in some degree, softened. I have studied under the Rev. Dr. Matignon a little of Divinity, and the rest of my time has been em-

<sup>27</sup> Father Matignon had done everything for young Barton. Besides constant inquiries to the school authorities about his progress, he had often sent him books and other gifts. After the boy had decided not to return to the Seminary, Father Matignon received a letter from one of his professors, containing an affectionate appeal for the boy's return. Father Matignon copied it and sent it to Barton, then already in Dartmouth. The youth replied that he had read it with gratitude, but that he was every day more convinced that he had no vocation for the clerical state. (Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Feb. 14, 1812, *Notre Dame Archives*.)

<sup>28</sup> Bertrand to Father Matignon, Dec. 24, 1813 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

<sup>29</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 P 1.



ployed in perfecting myself in the other branches I had already studied. . . ."<sup>30</sup>

His studying at the Boston priests' house that winter was the first incident of a series of similar cases. Beginning the very next winter, other boys studied for the priesthood at the Boston rectory. This allows dating the origin of a rudimentary Boston diocesan seminary in the year 1813. Undoubtedly, the two students that constituted this infant institution in its beginning busied themselves about the altar and the divine services, as well as their studies, and probably Edward at least helped out in the catechizing.

Meanwhile, Father Matignon had added another to Boston's roll of aspirants to the priesthood. In 1811, so it seems, he had induced a certain John Dick to send his oldest son to Montreal College, but the war had prevented the boy's return for the autumn term of 1812.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, too, the Catholic lower school, which had been in existence for some few years in the previous decade, was revived. There is, however, no extant proof that it was strictly a church school. It was kept by a certain Mr. Heaney, an Irishman, who was also a colored person. He was well educated and accomplished and an excellent Christian, who had the confidence of all the citizens — one proof of which was that he never lacked pupils. He also held the position of superintendent of the Sunday school.<sup>32</sup>

During the war another kind of Catholic school also existed in Boston. It was conducted by a certain Father Francis Xavier Brosius, an Alsatian priest who during part of the time was an authorized tutor at Harvard College. Father Brosius, a native of Strasbourg, had offered his services to Bishop Carroll for the American mission as early as 1790. In late 1792, he arrived in America at Baltimore with the famous Prince Gallitzin, who

<sup>30</sup> Edward Kavanagh to Father Maréchal, April 13, 1814, cited in *Maine Cath. Hist. Mag.*, VII (1916), 281.

<sup>31</sup> Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Aug. 10, 1812 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

<sup>32</sup> Rev. Sherwood Healy, in *The Cathedral*, Nov. 25, 1874. But the date given in that article is incorrect; cf. *Account Book*, 1818 and 1819, in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*

entered the Seminary there a few days after his arrival. Father Brosius himself served the parish of Conewago, Pennsylvania, for several years, and in 1807 founded a school at Mount Airy, near Philadelphia, which he conducted until September, 1812. On the 11th of that month he was in New York on his way to Boston. His previous history as a schoolmaster and Bishop Cheverus' idea of founding a school in Boston may well have influenced him to decide upon this move, for the Bishop of Boston had passed through Conewago and Philadelphia on his return from being consecrated. In any case, Father Brosius appeared in Boston in the autumn of 1812 and began a private school.

By December 30, 1812, he already had gotten as pupils a few young men to whom he was giving lessons in mathematics. Bishop Cheverus hoped that he might be enabled to remain in Boston, but recognized that as his health was very precarious, he could be of little, if any, assistance in the ministry.<sup>33</sup>

Father Brosius was a good natural scientist, and particularly devoted himself to mathematics. At the time he came to Boston, he was busy preparing the first American edition of Cavallo's *Elements of Natural and Experimental Philosophy*, which was published in Philadelphia in 1813, and reprinted in 1819.

On February 21, 1814, the President and Fellows of Harvard College voted to authorize and encourage Father Brosius as a private instructor in Mathematics.<sup>34</sup> The number of his scholars was thirty-eight.<sup>35</sup> On October 27, 1814, the Harvard Corporation voted to continue him for six months more: he was to teach all such scholars "as shall be sent to him by the Government."<sup>36</sup> During the year 1815, Father Brosius issued another book entitled *A new and concise method of*

<sup>33</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Dec. 30, 1812 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Jan. 19, 1813 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice, Montreal*). J. Reily, *Conewago, a Collection of Catholic Local History* (Martinsburg, W.Va., 1885), pp. 58ff.; *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, VI (1895), 33 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Harvard Univ. Arch., College Records*, V, 144; 1, 5, 30.

<sup>35</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, March 18, 1814 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*). He noted that Father Brosius had some relatives living with him.

<sup>36</sup> *Harvard Univ. Arch., loc. cit.*, V, 170; 1, 5, 30.

*finding the latitude by double altitudes of the Sun*; it was dedicated to the Boston Marine Society.<sup>37</sup> His contract with Harvard, which expired on April 27, 1815, was probably not renewed, for the war was over. During at least part of the year 1815, the priest lived at Jamaica Plain and gave lessons, among others to George Ticknor, not in mathematics but in German, to help him during an intended residence at a German university.<sup>38</sup>

His situation in September, 1815, has been described by Bishop Plessis, on whom he evidently made a deep impression when the Bishop met him in Boston:

Father Brosius [the Canadian prelate wrote] has hired a beautiful and spacious house, belonging to the Vice-President of the United States, for which he pays a yearly rental of three or four hundred dollars, and he has for the support of himself and his numerous family only the profit which he can make on five or six students, who are his boarders and pupils. He has a large share of urbanity and an equal amount of uncommon humor. In a word, he is one of those rare beings who knows how to capture and preserve the good will of all those with whom he comes in contact.<sup>39</sup>

Unable, by reason of his continued poor health and his obligations, to take an active and regular part in the ministry here, he planned to go first to Quebec and finally to Bordeaux in France, where he was given an easy place. At his departure from Boston (October 1, 1816), Bishop Cheverus wrote that he and Father Matignon would lose "the example of a pure and amiable piety and the pleasing society of a learned confrère."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> J. W. Parsons, *Early Catholic Americana* (New York, 1939), p. 121.

<sup>38</sup> G. Ticknor, *Life, Letters, and Journal* (ed. by G. Hillard, 2 vols.: Boston, 1876), I, 11.

<sup>39</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites pastorales*, p. 155.

<sup>40</sup> Bishop Plessis to Bishop Cheverus, Sept. 25, 1815, Feb. 22, 1816; Bishop Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, Oct. 30, 1815, March 28, 1816 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*); Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 23, Oct. 9, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*); Bishop Cheverus to Neale, Oct. 3, 1816 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); Bishop Cheverus to Bonneuil, May 3, 1817 (*Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XIV [1903], 457).

## V

During these years the two Boston priests were interested and associated in a Catholic educational work which had a certain importance in the literary history of this country. It centred apparently in New York, and went under the name of *L'École Économique*. Baron Hyde de Neuville was its reputed founder, and other prominent French refugees like General Jean V. Moreau and Joseph Desnoues belonged to it. Bishop Cheverus was certainly an active member. In early 1810, the association, which provided schooling for the children of poor French refugees, was caring for more than two hundred pupils, and received grants of aid from the New York State Legislature. As part of its work it published texts in French, several of which have been traced. One of these, printed in 1810, was a *Catechism in the Foundations of the Christian Faith*, for the use of both the young and the old. There is some reason to believe that Father Matignon or Bishop Cheverus had a part in its preparation.<sup>41</sup>

It is certain that these two Boston priests were actively connected with another French Catholic work, which was probably begun under the same auspices. Reference is made to a new edition of the *French New Testament*. On September 2, 1810, Father Matignon, writing to Father Le Saulnier, S.S., of Montreal made mention of it as

a very excellent edition of the French New Testament of Sacy, done here under my care and that of Mr. Cheverus. At this moment, the Acts are finished. These, together with the Gospels form a first volume, in 8vo, of more than four hundred pages, and with very good type. The style of Sacy is retouched, and even corrected at times, after comparison with the editions of Carrière, the abbé de Vance and others. The publisher (Mr. Fauçon) is a master of French and well to do, who publishes it at his own expense, and who has made already very large advances for the purpose.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> J. W. Parsons, *op. cit.*, pp. 85, 97; xv, n. 21; *Mém. du Baron Hyde de Neuville* (Paris, 1888), I, 480.

<sup>42</sup> *Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal; Father Finotti, *Bibliographia*, p. 40.



The second volume also was soon finished. Two editions were published: one in fine paper at \$4, the other in common paper at \$3.50. Other books were published under the same auspices, and probably with similar help from the Boston clergy. Among them were a portable *Bibliothèque Française des meilleurs écrivains français* in prose, and a *Petite Grammaire*. Of the *Bibliothèque Française*, Father Matignon felt that it could be safely and even profitably put in the hands of youth.<sup>43</sup>

Reference is also found on December 3, 1811, to a *Catéchisme*, connected with Father Matignon.<sup>44</sup> This item may well be identical with the one referred to above. In 1813, the Boston clergy had printed for themselves, by J. Belcher, of Boston, an edition of Fleury's *Short Historical Catechism* in English.<sup>45</sup> In 1813, Bishop Cheverus got out a new and shorter edition of his *Roman Catholic Manual*.<sup>46</sup>

Another literary enterprise in which the venerable Doctor Matignon interested himself was the New York Jesuits' edition of F. Reeve's *Church History*. When Father Kohlmann mentioned to Father Matignon his intention of reprinting that book, the latter pointed out to him a great number of pages which he deemed very unfit to be placed in the hands of the common faithful. Father Kohlmann agreed with the reverend doctor's judgment.<sup>47</sup>

These books, and many others, were on sale in Boston at the store of Nicholas Mooney. This enterprising member of the Catholic congregation, whose residence here can be traced to 1804, had early and successfully embarked on the business of Catholic bookseller. He kept a stock in Boston, and also

<sup>43</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Du Bourg, Oct. 2, 1810 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*). In the Boston Church *Register*, there is a record of the burial of "Michael Nicholas Fauçon, May 29, 1817, age 47, having received the Sacraments." It was signed by Father Matignon.

<sup>44</sup> Castel to Father Matignon (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

<sup>45</sup> Parsons, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 (443), and 103 (420). Cf. also Bishop Cheverus to Father Grassi, June 13, 1814 (*Fordham Arch.*).

<sup>46</sup> Printed by J. T. Buckingham, Boston (copy in *Boston Public Library*).

<sup>47</sup> Father Kohlmann to Father Grassi, March 21, 1814 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 R 19).

traveled, once at least as far as Charleston, South Carolina, for his affairs.<sup>48</sup>

One effect of the declaration of war in 1812 was the postponement of the meeting of the hierarchy planned for the end of that year. Bishop Cheverus was the first known advocate of postponement. It was supposed, he declared, when the date of the meeting was set that by its opening "we would be able to hear from the Holy Father" about vacant sees, etc.: but that supposition had not been verified. He then advanced certain personal objections. There was the burden thrown on Father Matignon by his own further absence from Boston (he had just returned from a two and one half months' trip to Maine), and the almost insuperable objection of the expense involved.

Therefore he asked the Archbishop whether, if the latter thought that the Council ought to be held, a Vicar-General elected *ad hoc* could not be his representative there.<sup>49</sup> The Archbishop postponed the Council, and when some of the suffragans attributed this to the Bishop of Boston's action, the latter defended himself to the Archbishop, and even offered to attend the Council if Monsignor Carroll still decided to summon it. There was evidently a demand on the part of some bishops to treat the unhappy differences then existing between the Catholic Bishops of Ireland and the Vicars Apostolic in England. Both Bishop Cheverus and Father Matignon felt, like the Archbishop himself, that the American bishops could not with propriety deliver any opinion on the matter.<sup>50</sup>

## VI

To the war also was undoubtedly due the extension of the Boston church's charitable work. On April 17, 1814 (the Sun-

<sup>48</sup> Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Sept. 2, 1810 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal); Father Matignon to Archbishop Carroll, Jan. 23, 1810 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 I, 11); Bishop Cheverus to Father Grassi, June 13, 1814 (*Fordham Arch.*).

<sup>49</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Aug. 31, 1812 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>50</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Jan. 5, 1813 (*ibid.*); Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Jan. 19, 1813 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

day after Easter), a new religious society, inaugurated in Holy Cross Church, received its first member. Known as the Confraternity of the Holy Cross, it was established apparently on the preceding Good Friday. There is reason to believe that it was not a completely new society, but the revival under a new name of the already well-known Association of the Blessed Sacrament. For its rules retained several of the obligations of the older association, some of them even *verbatim*. It was new, however, in changing the emphasis from the Blessed Sacrament as such to the Holy Cross, and focusing devotion on the Cross as the altar on which the Body and Blood of the Redeemer were first enthroned. In conformity therewith the weekly day was changed from Thursday to Friday, "on which the members will call to remembrance the passion and death of Christ."

As a token of their membership "and to excite a perpetual remembrance of the passion of Jesus Christ," those who belonged to the society promised that they would "constantly wear a little cross or crucifix, which will be visible on the breast, at least on communion days and at all the meetings." They must likewise foster a particular veneration of the Blessed Virgin. The rules also contained the admonition that all members "must always bear in mind that no exterior practices of religion, however excellent in themselves, are of any avail before God, unless they be accompanied by an interior spirit of piety."

Together with their devotions, the members were also to exercise

a great care for the good order of their families, instructing their children, sending them to catechism and instructions, having family prayers every night, being early at home, cherishing peace and concord, avoiding quarrels, banishing from their house dangerous companies, swearers, tale-bearers, and whatever is contrary to decency and mutual edification.

United with its strictly devotional aspect, the Confraternity had also a charitable side. By this it manifested its greatest difference from the previous association. The 7th article of

the Rules appoints two general meetings each year, one in May, the other in November,

to deliberate upon whatever may promote the design of the Association, make collections for the poor, choose some trustees or others, whose duties shall be to visit during the six months of their appointment, the sick of the Association or other sick, principally the poor, to assist and comfort them, to inquire about the instruction of the children, and perform every other work of charity, corporal and spiritual, according to their abilities.

In this regard the Confraternity embraced the work later performed by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The register of the Confraternity contains the minutes of one of these semi-annual meetings, held in 1816, in which occurs the item:

By a vote of the Confraternity, Margaret Bryant and Elizabeth (Adams) Daniels were selected to visit the homes of the poor, to see that the children were sent to catechism, to ascertain their wants, and distribute among them the charitable gifts of the Confraternity.

By these religious means the society sought the attainment of its object, which was

to excite and maintain among the Catholics of this town and diocese (of which the Cathedral Church has been dedicated under the title of the Holy Cross) an emulation of piety; to strengthen them against the multiplied temptations to which they are exposed; and to procure, by the good example of the members, the propagation of our holy faith among our dissenting brethren.

As originally designed, the Confraternity consisted of two divisions, one for men and the other for women. Each division was to meet separately, and, although governed by the same rules, practicing the same devotions, and engaging in the same charitable works, was to be, in fact, a distinct society. The men's division, after having flourished for a while, ceased to exist. The women's division persevered in the work. Up to the



September of 1818, when Father Matignon died, some fifty-three (possibly sixty-four) women had been received into the Confraternity.<sup>51</sup>

Father Matignon's charity was illustrated in an especial manner at the time when a second group of Trappists arrived in Boston from France (August 6, 1811). The pastor's vain "coaxing" of the group to remain in this Diocese, his gentle kindness to them in their two months' sojourn, his continued solicitude for their welfare after they left here until they were united with Father Urbain's group, had all the marks of the charity of Christ himself.<sup>52</sup>

## VII

From the year 1810 to 1814, inclusive, the number of adult baptisms ran as follows:

9	12	15	10	6
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As has been previously remarked, these figures do not really indicate the total number of converts, because no record was kept of those whose non-Catholic baptism was considered valid. For example, the only really well-known person among the converts of this period does not appear among the adults baptized.

However, that these last were truly converts is clearly indicated by samples of their names: Swasey, Souther, Haynes, Jennison (another of the family mentioned before), Adams, Davis, Pomeroy, Smith, Carter, Pilky, Sprague, Homer, Worcester, Burrell, Fowler, Lancey, Baker, Young, Mills, Townsend, Nanles, Lilley, Converse, Downs, Pratt, Bennett, Patten, Clifton, Cox, Moorfields, and Fisher.

The outstanding convert of the period was Thomas Walley, Jr. This gentleman was the son of Thomas Walley, a prominent

<sup>51</sup> *Pilot*, Dec. 20, 1913, Sept. 12, 19, 1868; *Rules of the Confraternity or Association of the Holy Cross, Established at Boston, with the approbation of the Right Rev. Bishop* (no place, no date; but probably in Boston, in 1814; copy in Georgetown Univ. Library; photostat in Boston Dioc. Arch.).

<sup>52</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, XXII (1905), 36; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Oct. 16, 1811 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); Father Matignon to Father Tessier, Nov., 1811 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

Boston merchant. Born September 2, 1768,<sup>53</sup> he had received the usual education of his class, attending the Boston Latin school, until his father placed him in the family and under the care of the Rev. Dr. Shute in Hingham. Later the young man was placed in a French family in Boston, where he was obliged to speak the language constantly and to have intimate contact with the French colony in Boston. Thus he was present at the first Mass said by the Abbé de la Poterie at Mr. Baury's house. In the course of time he fell in love with a young French lady from Martinique, named Elizabeth Lalong Ferrol; but his father was strongly opposed to their marriage, "not merely because the family with which his son was anxious to unite himself were Roman Catholics, but because they had but little property." After some time, however, the father evidently yielded on the property question, but not on the religious one, for the two young folks were married by a Protestant minister. That happened on July 28, 1798. On February 4th following, this marriage was rehabilitated in presence of Father Matignon and of some of the groom's relatives, John Phillips, his brother-in-law, and Samuel H. Walley, his brother.

In the year 1800, the young couple moved to Brookline, much nearer to the church than was Dedham, where they had first resided. There was at first declared to be an agreement between them, at the time of marriage, that if Providence should favor them with children, the sons should be baptized and educated as Protestants and the daughters as Catholics. Accordingly, their first child, who was a daughter, was baptized by Father Matignon. When the first son was born, Mr. Walley had him baptized in the Rev. Mr. Pierce's church at Brookline. In 1803, he formally declared himself a member of that church, but from the first "was inconstant in his attendance at religious worship [there]. Whenever his wife inclined to go to her church in Boston, he never failed to accompany her, and always in such cases went to her church, if any."<sup>54</sup>

Fathers Matignon and Cheverus became constant visitors at

<sup>53</sup> *Report, Record Commission*, XXIV, 317.

<sup>54</sup> Rev. John Pierce, *Memoirs* (ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*).

the Walley home, and their host apparently came to believe that "everything which had been said or written against the 'Catholicks [was] the result of prejudice, and everything which they could allege in their own favour [was] just and impartial.'" His Protestant pastor, on whose memoirs most of the above account is based, was apprehensive that Mr. Walley, Jr., was

under undue influence from his father, who, he might fear, would deprive him of his portion in his estate, should he become a Catholick. Be this as it may [the minister wrote], not long after his father's death, he had a son, whom, without consulting me, he allowed Mr. Matignon to baptize [October 23, 1811]. On this, I remonstrated with him upon violating his agreement. His defense was that as the son was named after Dr. Matignon, he was willing to gratify his wife, by allowing Dr. Matignon to baptize his son.<sup>55</sup> From that time I have been suspicious that he would not long continue a Protestant. He first gave up family prayers, which he had, for a season, performed. He then used to invite Catholick priests, who were frequently in his family, to pray according to their forms. As his children grew up, he kept them from my catechisings, and seldom sent them to our place of worship, even when they could go nowhere else. In fine, his mind was gradually preparing to adopt and profess to the world the Catholick faith in all its assumptions and in all its absurdities. I have done all which I thought likely to keep him within the pale of the Protestant Church, but to no effect; and I can truly say, that if he is sincere in his new profession, I am better pleased with his total desertion of the Protestant cause than with his professed adherence to it while he remained in such a wavering and unsettled state. . . .

On April 10, 1814 (Easter), Elizabeth, his eldest daughter, made her first communion. Mr. Walley probably made his profession of the Catholic faith on May 29th, which that year was Pentecost. (On June 1st, he told his minister that he *had* become a Catholic.)<sup>56</sup> The Bishop confirmed him and gave him first communion on October 23rd.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> This son, Francis, was born Oct. 16, 1811, and baptized Oct. 23rd. Father Matignon was both godfather and minister of the Sacrament.

<sup>56</sup> Rev. John Pierce, *Memoirs* (Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.).

<sup>57</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Mrs. Seton, Jan. 20, 1815.

In later years Mr. Walley wrote out in summary fashion his own account of that conversion. He knew the story of the Catholic Church in Boston, better perhaps than any other Boston non-Catholic.

In its beginnings [he said] I saw nothing but what confirmed all my early prejudices against the Catholic Church; but I desire to be thankful for the mercy and grace of God, and also for the arrival in our country of those two most excellent men, Dr. Matignon and Mr. Cheverus, who soon gave a different color to all things. . . .<sup>58</sup>

When Bishop Cheverus reported the conversion to Archbishop Carroll, he spoke of Mr. Walley as

a gentleman of very respectable family connexions, residing at Brookline, five miles from Boston; a man of very extensive reading, very acute judgment, etc. . . . [whom] we value as a precious acquisition to the Church. We have valued him as a friend for years previous to his becoming one of the household of the faith.<sup>59</sup>

## VIII

On June 3, 1814, Boston received news of the deliverance of the Pope from his long captivity and also of what Bishop Cheverus called "the happy and wonderful events" which gave peace to Europe. The Bishop immediately announced that a solemn Te Deum would be sung at the Cathedral on the following Sunday, June 5th. He himself preached on the occasion and had among his audience a great number of the members of the State Legislature.<sup>60</sup> The text of his sermon is not known. Nevertheless, the liberation of the Pope, after long years, from the power of Europe's dictator was such a striking refutation of the bold and presumptuous prophecies about the

<sup>58</sup> Oct. 13, 1846. Letter to his (youngest) daughter, Miss Mary L. Walley, in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 44 ff.

<sup>59</sup> July 13, 1814 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>60</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, July 13, 1814 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); *Columbian Centinel*, June 18, 1814.



overthrow of *Antichrist* and the extinction of the Catholic Church that the Bishop's words may easily be imagined. One may judge from a reference in the *Boston Monthly Magazine* that this sermon was not one of the extemporaneous moral and religious discourses for which the Bishop was so well known, but was one of the remarkable sermons in which "he poured out his feelings and reasonings in all the graces of composition and the charms of eloquence."

On July 13, 1814, Bishop Cheverus received a copy of the Archbishop's pastoral on the same event, which he read from the pulpit the next Sunday.<sup>61</sup> Of course, the events which accompanied the Holy Father's liberation included the restoration of the Bourbons, which was also highly welcome to the Boston priests, for Catholicity and Monarchy had been their inheritance.

Very shortly after this triumph of the Church, Bishop Cheverus had a special opportunity to manifest also his love of America. It was particularly in regard to the War of 1812 that a non-Catholic Bostonian admirer wrote of him: "He was a good citizen of his adopted country. He never lost an opportunity of teaching his flock the blessings flowing from the government under which they lived, and kept alive in their breasts a warm and constant patriotism."<sup>62</sup> There was a particular incident which gives solid support to this statement. In September, 1814, when the British advance down the Maine coast occasioned great concern in Boston, the selectmen issued an appeal to the residents of the town and the surrounding towns for help on the fortifications for the harbor. In response various organizations offered their services, and from September 10th to October 10th worked at Fort Strong and at Savin Hill in Dorchester. Among those organizations one of the largest was that named "Bishop Cheverus and congregation, 250 men." They had worked on September 27th. They were equaled in

<sup>61</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, July 13, 1814. The text of this splendid defense of the Holy See and triumphant eulogy of Catholic fidelity is partly printed in Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, pp. 812-814; wholly printed in *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VIII (1892), 146 ff.

<sup>62</sup> S. Knapp in *Boston Monthly Magazine* (June, 1825), p. 11.

number only by a group named "The Schoolmasters of Boston," which also counted 250. Among other less numerous organizations one of the largest was the "Hibernian Society, 150," who performed their labor on September 15th. The selectmen, when acknowledging the work already done, asked for two more days' work to finish the job. There is good reason to believe that the Bishop and his congregation again answered this appeal.<sup>63</sup>

A by-product of the affair also furnished a sample of the Bishop's courtesy. The following letter was probably but one among many sent on the occasion to persons concerned:

Boston, September 28th, 1814

To Paul Revere and Son,

Bishop Cheverus presents his compliments to Messrs. P. Revere & Son and thanks them for having permitted the men in their employ to work yesterday with him at the fortifications, and for generally allowing them their usual wages as if they had been working for him [*sic*].<sup>64</sup>

## IX

In 1808 (January 12th), when the relations between Britain and the United States were already quite strained, the Indians of Passamaquoddy had entered into a friendly agreement with certain other Indians (Micmacs?) at St. Andrews, New Brunswick. And when, in 1812, war actually broke out between the British and American Governments, successful efforts were made to keep the Indians neutral.<sup>65</sup> At the meeting of July 6, 1812, the Passamaquoddies requested some instrument in writing so as to be put up in their chapel, forbidding all British

<sup>63</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 15, 1814; see also below, *Boston Monthly Magazine*.

An excellent note describing the whole episode, with its panic and hasty attempts at fortifications, is to be found in the *Diary of Isaiah Thomas*, in *Transactions and Coll. Am. Antiqu. Soc.*, IX, 244-245: ". . . On one day, the venerable Dr. Lothrop was seen with the deacons and elders of his church, shovelling and carrying sods in wheelbarrows; on another, Bishop Cheverus and 250 of his congregation labored on Dorchester Heights."

<sup>64</sup> E. H. Goss, *Paul Revere* (Boston, 1891), pp. 592 f.

<sup>65</sup> *Original Passamaquoddy Papers*, July 6, 1812.

subjects to do any injury whatever to that building, or in any way whatever molest the Indians. Father Matignon was extremely pleased at this result; and declared to a friend in Canada:

There is both merit and humanity in your officers and your government in restricting the Indians and refusing to employ them as auxiliary troops, despite their ardor for war. Ours, at least those of the East whom Mr. Ciquart formerly governed [*sic*], have declared themselves neutral. May all the other tribes follow this example.<sup>66</sup>

Father Romagné's influence in this matter was taken for granted. In the year 1811, he had been appointed by the Massachusetts Government as the colleague of William Jenks on a commission "to induce the Indians of the Penobscot to settle on and cultivate their lands." On September 12th, Jenks reported that he had just visited these Indians in company with Father Romagné and was pleased with the disposition manifested by them in regard to the subject.<sup>67</sup>

At almost the same date Bishop Cheverus had made his first episcopal visitation of these same Penobscots. On Sunday, September 8, 1811, he officiated there and gave Confirmation to 122 of them. Father Romagné, who had prepared them and who assisted the Bishop on that occasion, wrote to Archbishop Carroll about it, declaring that

the poor natives . . . were delighted at having the happiness to see their Bishop, the first perhaps that ever set foot on their island. From the time of their conversion until now, they were used to going to Canada to be confirmed.

It was characteristic of the holy missionary that he then continued:

It is more than twelve years since you gave me the spiritual care of these natives: God knows how long I shall continue amongst them. I have the same affection for them and I do

<sup>66</sup> Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, Aug. 10, 1812 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

<sup>67</sup> *Blake Papers, Maine Hist. Society.*

not think their regard for me has abated any. The Passamaquoddy Indians will have also the happiness to be visited next summer by their Bishop.<sup>68</sup>

Because of the war, Bishop Cheverus did not pay his intended visit to the 'Quoddies either in 1812 or later. From July 11, 1814, onward much of New England territory was actually invaded by the enemy. Eastport, Castine, and Belfast were successively taken, and then Bangor, so that by October the whole country east of the Penobscot was in British hands.<sup>69</sup> Father Romagné was in the very midst of these harassing events. But, as he told Bishop Cheverus, "he was treated very politely by the British commander and officers at Passamaquoddy. He was also at Penobscot when Castine was taken, but neither he nor his Indians have been disturbed." He planned to open the winter of 1814 at Mr. Kavanagh's (as usual), but to visit Indian Old Town Island in the Penobscot at Christmas.<sup>70</sup>

Even during the war, Bishop Cheverus continued his annual mission in Maine. Every summer saw him resume the care of the parish at Newcastle and in the surrounding towns. The Bishop's usual program was to spend Sunday at the church in Newcastle and make his stations during the week. His circuit, during these summer missions in Maine, embraced the towns of Newcastle, Wiscasset, Union, Hope, Warren, Bristol, Malta, Jefferson, Waldoboro, Pinhook, Edgecomb, Ballestown, Pittstown, Hallowell, Bangor, Gardiner, Whitefield. All these lay in the neighborhood of the Damariscotta River, with Bangor the farthest extreme on the Penobscot and Gardiner the farthest on the Kennebec.

In the summer of 1814, there was some question of shortening his trip because of the proximity of the British, but he held to his planned schedule. "Otherwise," he explained, "it would be said here, not in jest, but in earnest, that fear had caused me

<sup>68</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Oct. 3, 1811; Father Romagné to Archbishop Carroll, Oct. 8, 1811 (both in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*; the latter in 7 E 7).

<sup>69</sup> Williamson, *History of Maine*, II, 639 ff.

<sup>70</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, Oct. 23, 1814 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).



to leave earlier; for the people here really believe themselves very exposed to the enemy.”<sup>71</sup> His plan involved departure from Newcastle after Vespers on Sunday, September 18th, and taking the stage at Wiscasset on Monday morning. Thus, he would arrive in Boston on Tuesday or Wednesday evening. If he went on horseback, he could arrive only on Friday. However, his usual stops at Portland and at Portsmouth would add two days’ time to the trip.

A characteristic note accompanied the outline of that return trip. It all depended, he declared, on whether he could “succeed beforehand in effecting the sale of a horse, which I have undertaken for a poor widow.”<sup>72</sup> This homey touch suggests that the Bishop’s usual charity had more than the usual opportunities in Maine that year. Mention has already been made of the adverse effect of the war on the fortunes of the Messrs. Kavanagh and Cottrill. In general, one gets the definite impression that the mission in Maine went through hard times during the whole period.

During the same period the Catholics in Salem began with a new phase of activity. From early 1811 they had regular monthly visits from the Boston clergy; later, they were to have the consolation of a resident priest and the hope of a church among them, only to be again disappointed. On Tuesday, April 30, 1811, the Sacrament of Confirmation was conferred at Salem by Bishop Cheverus. The ever friendly Mr. Bentley recorded this event in his *Diary*, noting it as the first time that Bishop Cheverus or any other Catholic Bishop ever pontificated in Salem, and noting also that the Bishop then went to the eastward and returned to Salem again for the following Sunday, when he preached to a few Catholics at Mr. Campbell’s in Daniels Street below Derby Street.<sup>73</sup>

According to the records, Father Matignon baptized in Salem on October 6th and on December 1st that same year. On other occasions besides these, each of the Boston clergymen was in

<sup>71</sup> To Bonneuil, Sept. 12, 1814. The Cheverus-Bonneuil letters are to be found in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, XIV (1903). The one cited is on page 321.

<sup>72</sup> Letters to Bonneuil, Sept. 12, 1815, as above.

<sup>73</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, IV, 20.

Salem, keeping up the monthly visits to which Mr. Bentley refers. The minister named a house in Herbert Street as the place of Catholic worship. That was clearly Mr. Kenelly's house, and there is seemingly good evidence that this house was the usual place of Catholic worship throughout the year 1812 also.<sup>74</sup>

A Salem tradition, transmitted at least in part through the son of a contemporary and recorded by Bishop Walsh, pictured the missionary Bishop on his journeys to Salem and in his activity there:

Sometimes, particularly in bad weather, he would use the stage-coach, which was the regular conveyance between Boston and Salem until the year 1838. He was always the same kind, affable companion and, as nearly all the passengers in the coach were Protestants, his presence and pleasant manner of conversation opened their eyes to the lovable and beautiful character hidden beneath the form and garments of the Catholic priest and Bishop . . . the good Bishop was always the most welcome passenger in the stage-coach.

At other times, satchel in hand, he would start from Boston early in the afternoon, cross over to Chelsea on the ferry boat, and then walk to Salem, reaching the house of Mr. Simon early in the evening. The dust and fatigue of the journey would naturally create a desire for rest, but after taking his frugal meal, he would go to visit the poor and sick, and the money saved by not using the stage coach was always given to some deserving poor person.<sup>75</sup>

Early in the year 1813, Bishop Cheverus had the opportunity to send a resident priest to Salem, in the person of the Rev. Dr. Matthew O'Brien, already referred to above. The priest was the brother of Father William O'Brien, the New York pastor who had incurred Father La Poterie's wrath in 1789. Father Matthew himself had come to New York to assist his brother in 1798, and was first stationed in Albany. He was remarkable for his zeal and his ability as a preacher and had attracted favorable notice from the members of the Legislature

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 81, 552.

<sup>75</sup> Rev. L. S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 19.

at Albany by his clear and fearless interpretation of Catholic doctrine.<sup>76</sup> From 1801 he was in New York City. While there he had, among other consolations, that of receiving Mrs. Elizabeth Seton into the Church in March, 1805. Perhaps it was a result of the contacts made through Mrs. Seton that, when he left New York, he came to Boston in August, 1808. Shortly after his arrival here, Father Matignon, the charitable, wrote to Bishop Carroll that he would try to keep him until the first weeks of September, when Father Cheverus would have returned from Maine. He added: "Although it is not my province to interfere in his affairs, I cannot help the lively regret that he has no permanent place."<sup>77</sup> The hard times in Boston evidently prevented Father Matignon from giving him permanent employment at that period on the New England mission. The Irish priest, however, assisted here for a time. He baptized on August 7, 1808. Shortly afterwards he found a place in Philadelphia, and later still in Charleston, South Carolina. In mid-May, 1812, he again appeared in Boston.<sup>78</sup>

He came in time to witness the Pentecost Confirmation ceremony and to remark on the "very great number of members of the Legislature who came to the Sermons." He kept himself "busy making out Sermons en Regle in order to do these folks as much good as possible."<sup>79</sup> The Rev. Dr. O'Brien stayed on in Boston and went frequently to Salem, to serve what he described as "a small but very poor congregation, so much so indeed that I have to pay my Stage there, only excepting my last visit."<sup>80</sup>

Some time in the early spring of 1813, Bishop Cheverus assigned Father O'Brien to Salem as resident priest.<sup>81</sup> Where he

<sup>76</sup> Guilday, *Life of John Carroll*, p. 629.

<sup>77</sup> Father Matignon to Archbishop Carroll, Aug. 11, 1808 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>78</sup> J. Kirlin, *Catholicity in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1909), pp. 200-204; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, June 2, 1812 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>79</sup> Father O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, June 2, 1812 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 2 O 7).

<sup>80</sup> Father O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, Jan. 5, 1813 (*ibid.*, 5 V 10).

<sup>81</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, March 18, 1814: "Dr. O'Brien . . . has for this past year resided in Salem and exercised his ministry among the few Catholics there."

lived is not known; but it is known that he held the Good Friday (April 16th) morning service in the Court House. This was the first Catholic service held in a public building since Father Thayer's time, and the very first ever conducted in public "in due form with the service."<sup>82</sup> No data are extant to show that the Salem Catholics continued to use the Court House for special days such as Easter; indeed, there is reason to believe that the Good Friday services were an exception, for at Christmas (1813), the Catholic celebration was held in "their private place of worship." The non-Catholics of Salem took special notice of that particular Christmas, because the day was observed not only by the Episcopalians, as usual, and by the Catholics, which was expected, but also by the Universalists, which had not been expected.<sup>83</sup>

Meanwhile, the Catholics had purchased a lot of land for a church.<sup>84</sup> After Easter, 1814, the zealous Irish priest went to New York to bring there the Holy Oils (there was no bishop in New York at the time) and to collect for the building of the church in Salem. On May 15, 1814, he wrote from New York to Archbishop Carroll:

The progress of religion in New England is very hopeful. . . . A lot of ground is already bought at Salem, and the slender congregation of that place, notwithstanding the evils which peculiarly affect it, will thrive and become expanded. The confused situation of a chamber (for church services) shocks the prejudice of many, and many declare that had we a public church, they would purchase pews and become incorporated with us.<sup>85</sup>

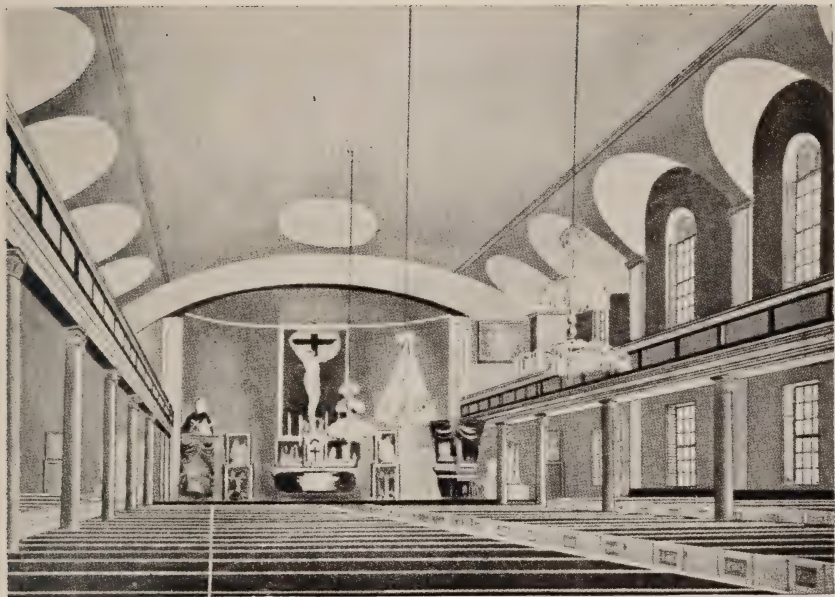
By July, Father O'Brien was back in Boston, where he stayed with Father Matignon, while the Bishop made his usual trip to Maine. Meanwhile, Salem had only monthly visits from Father Matignon. Whether Father O'Brien remained in Boston or returned to Salem again is not known. Mr. Bentley said

<sup>82</sup> *Diary*, IV, 162.      <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 223.

<sup>84</sup> Rev. L. S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 20.

<sup>85</sup> Father O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, New York, May 15, 1814 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 V 11).





CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS — INTERIOR



ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH



of him, after he left Salem, "His contentions with a family of neutral French and general deportment made his residence in Salem unprofitable to him." <sup>86</sup>

Father O'Brien left Boston about January 20, 1815.<sup>87</sup> He died in Baltimore October 20, 1815, at the age of sixty.<sup>88</sup>

During the war, several signs of Catholic growth appeared in Rhode Island, particularly in Providence. By 1812, the visits to the State which Father Matignon had been making each November began to be increased in number, and were in great part undertaken by the Bishop himself. The several French refugee families, whose names appeared on Father Matignon's records, seem to have departed by 1813; and in their stead a number of Irish names began to be inscribed on the church books. Besides the original Dillon family, there are found that of Terence and Margaret Reilly (Bristol), that of Sylvester and Catherine McCann (Portsmouth), and the names of Thomas and Ann Kasseddy, David and Rhode Dee, Edward Gilgard, Mary Carroll, David Dedy, Anne Gray (Portsmouth), Lackin, Patrick and Mary McGeogh, William and Sarah Walsh, Thomas and Martha Howard, John Corrigan, Sarah Kiley, Lawrence Smith (Providence).

On November 15 and 18, 1812, Bishop Cheverus visited Portsmouth and Bristol and confirmed in both places. He returned on February 7 and 14, 1813 (both days being Sundays), spending the former at Portsmouth and the latter at Providence, confirming at both places. As a result of what he saw there, he soon arranged to rent a small wooden building in Providence for use as a church. The Bishop, who kept up some regular schedule of visits there, was sometimes replaced, for example when he was in Maine, by the ever-helpful Dr. O'Brien, who, on one occasion (May 15, 1814), described the Providence situation:

A building at Providence has been rented and formed into a church by a few Catholics who are there. A mere grain of mustard seed only eighteen months ago is now rapidly starting

<sup>86</sup> *Diary*, IV, 360.

<sup>87</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Mrs. Seton (n. d.).

<sup>88</sup> *Laity's Directory* (New York, 1822), p. 135.

up, and, watered as it has been by the amiable and laborious Bishop, will soon become a tree.<sup>89</sup>

The fact that a place for a church could be rented, although few baptisms are recorded, shows that the congregation was made up largely of unmarried Catholic men.

Meantime, in the State of Connecticut, little or nothing was done for Catholicity. According to a rather widespread opinion, both Bishop Cheverus and Father Matignon did mission work there during this period. The former is said to have visited New Haven, and the latter Hartford, both in the year 1813. Nevertheless, there are good reasons to doubt the correctness of the opinion in regard to both clergymen. As for the Bishop, it is stated that in 1813 he said Mass in a house in York Street, New Haven, the residence of a professor of French at Yale University.<sup>90</sup> As his known itinerary practically excludes any visit to Connecticut in 1813, the tradition, while correct in substance, may well be mistaken for the year mentioned. Furthermore, as the Bishop is known to have visited Connecticut, in both 1815 and 1817, either of these years would be an acceptable date for his having said Mass at the French professor's house.

The statement about Father Matignon's visit to Hartford in the year 1813 is found first in Father Fitton's *Sketches of the Church in New England*, published in Boston, in 1872. It reads thus:

The first public sermon in English, at the invitation of Rev. Dr. Strong, a Congregationalist clergyman, was delivered by

<sup>89</sup> Father O'Brien to Archbishop Carroll, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.* See also Rev. James Fitton, *Sketches of the Establishment of the Catholic Church in New England* (Boston, 1872), p. 221, who dated the renting of the building in 1813. He also said that the building was moved to another lot, and was destroyed in a storm in 1815. Bishop Cheverus to Bonneauil, Sept. 12, 1814, from Newcastle, Maine.

<sup>90</sup> J. A. Rooney, *Connecticut Catholic Year Book* (Hartford, 1877), p. 70. There is no earlier known evidence for this statement. Father O'Donnell, in *History of the Catholic Church in New England* (II, 325), speaks of the incident as happening in 1823. Rooney repeated his own dating in *Cath. Hist. Rev.*, I (1915-1916) 151.



Rev. Dr. Matignon . . . about the year 1813, who, in those days when travelling on the Sabbath was by law prohibited, arrived at Hartford, on his way to New York, late of a Saturday evening. . . . For this courteous and friendly attention to a stranger, and he a Catholic priest, the reverend doctor was waited upon at an early hour, Monday morning, and gravely censured by the deacons for having allowed his pulpit to be so disgraced by a "popish priest." The reply was characteristic of the man, who knew somewhat of human nature: "Well, gentlemen," said he, "do your best, and do your worst; make the most of it; I have the ladies on my side!" Curiosity had been gratified, and the outspoken minister knew it.<sup>91</sup>

Father Matignon did not go to New York in the year 1813. He did, however, go there in 1802, for the purpose of collecting money toward the erection of the Boston church. He *could*, therefore, have been in Hartford *about the year* 1803, and the date 1813 given in the text *could* have been a printer's error. The story, even thus amended, is, nevertheless, still open to suspicion. For it begins with an error. Even if Father Matignon preached in Hartford, his would not have been the first public sermon in English on Catholic doctrine preached there. Already in 1790-1791, Father Thayer had preached in that city, and strangely enough, at the invitation of the same Rev. Dr. Strong.<sup>92</sup> If, as is probable, only one of the two stories is correct, the earlier is to be preferred, first, because it rests upon better and earlier evidence, and, secondly, because it fits in more naturally with other facts. Father Thayer was personally known to Dr. Strong, having been his pupil at Yale. For these reasons, and others not necessary to be set forth in this place, one may reasonably doubt the story of Father Matignon's Connecticut experience, as held by the common opinion. It was probably the result of a confusion in dates and persons and of a reminiscence of his visit to Suffield, Connecticut, on July 25, 1802. In any case, both Father Thayer's and Father Matignon's sermons were casual events. The real beginnings

<sup>91</sup> Rev. J. A. Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 188.

<sup>92</sup> *Records of Trinity Church, Hartford*, cited in *Boston Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842.

of the Hartford and New Haven missions were made at a much later date.<sup>93</sup>

Besides the missions, already mentioned, other places nearer to Boston appear in the church records of 1810-1815. Plymouth, for example, reappears in 1812. Watertown appears on September 21, 1812. The Bishop also visited Brookline, Milton, Malden, and Cambridgeport. Even Chelmsford comes into the record, on April 6, 1814, and May 12, 1814, on which occasion the zealous missionary baptized in that place. Wherever, indeed, he learned of a little group of Catholics, there the apostolic prelate turned his steps. Despite the war and its adverse effects, the Church in the Diocese of Boston was growing.

<sup>93</sup> See also Thomas McManus, *Historical Sketch of the Catholic Church in Hartford* (Hartford, 1800); Rev. John G. Shea, *The Catholic Church in the United States*, III, 113-114; *Boston Baptismal Register*, I, 104; *The Catholic Church in New England*, II, *Diocese of Hartford*, 119-120.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PASSING OF THE PIONEERS (1815-1818)

THE ENDING OF THE WAR, of course, brought great and joyous relief to Boston, where the defunct commerce could be revived and the idle energy could find a much-desired and profitable outlet. The new peace would occasion a slow but steady trickle of Irish Catholic immigrants, to begin that stream which in later years produced the extraordinary growth of the Church here. The Diocese would also witness the beginning of an Irish clerical body, and the coming of those valiant Irish ladies who would begin Father Thayer's long-anticipated Catholic school. There would also occur the start of mission work in the States of Vermont and Connecticut. However, these same three or four post-war years would witness the passing of the pioneers. The stalwart John Magner and Mary Lobb passed away, as did Father Thayer, Archbishop Carroll, and in the end Father Matignon himself. The Diocese likewise had to mourn the loss of the heroic Indian missionary, Father Romagné, who went back to France. The Diocese was even threatened for a moment with the loss of its devoted Bishop, who was nominated, but fortunately not appointed, Coadjutor Archbishop of Baltimore. In a word, these years were the transition time between the generation of foundation to that of promising superstructure.

To the two Catholic clergymen here in Boston, the ending of the war was a cause of rejoicing; it also meant, among other liberties, that of corresponding again with their friends in France and in Canada and, most of all, the triumph of their own and the Church's cause in their own country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Cheverus to his brother, Jan. 22, 1815; Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, April 18, 1815; Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, April 15, 1815.

Bishop Cheverus, in a letter to his brother in France, hailed the restoration there with exultation. "Blessed be the God of Mercy," he cried out, "who has given you peace and replaced on his throne the son of St. Louis and of Henry IV, and the brother of our holy martyr and good king, Louis XVI."<sup>2</sup> How afflicted he was at the unexpected return of Napoleon may be gathered from his letter to Archbishop Carroll of May 9, 1815. He wrote from New York, where he had gone to consecrate the new Cathedral. After describing the ceremony and paying a hearty tribute to the three Jesuit Fathers there, especially Father Fenwick, the Boston Bishop continued: "I know your heart has bled at the late astonishing and terrible event. How uncertain everything which belongs to this world. . . . It was on my way here that I heard the astounding news. It overpowered me."<sup>3</sup>

Father Matignon's sentiments may be gathered from what he wrote after that crisis had passed.

I spent a very happy Feast of St. Louis [August 25, 1815], being in spirit in Paris and Rome at the same time [the Pope had returned to Rome June 6th]. If your health improved at the previous good news, you should gain at least twenty years more of life when you hear the latest. . . . If they don't give Napoleon the place he deserves in the Tower of London among the lions and tigers, at least they will see to it that his claws and teeth do no more harm.<sup>4</sup>

They loved their native land, these saintly priests, and had cause these next few years to rejoice in its revived Catholicity. One of them, indeed, was sorely tempted to return to it. Bishop Cheverus wrote to his brother: "Today more than ever, it would be a joy to me to flee to your arms, but duty binds me here."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Cheverus to his brother, Jan. 22, 1815 (*Private Archives of M. de Plinval*; copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, May 9, 1815. See also Bishop Cheverus to Father Grassi, May 9, 1815 (in *Fordham Arch.*, 204 H 18), where Bishop Cheverus mentions "the late mournful and astonishing event, which has cast such a gloom over our bright hopes."

<sup>4</sup> Father Matignon to Father Le Saulnier, August 27, 1815 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Cheverus to his brother, as above.



## I

In some ways it was a happy duty. For besides the ending of the war, with its restoration of the monarchy and the re-establishment of communication with his family, there were also the hope of revival in the Diocese, his own good health, and the numerous friendships which he had in Boston. This is a fitting place to mention some of the Boston friends. The nearest were the Stoughtons. For many years now Father Matignon and the Bishop had found almost a second home at their house across the street. A Boston writer who, as a child, had known and revered the old consul, has left a fascinating description of him:

Old Mr. Stoughton [he was seventy years old in 1815] . . . used to occupy the first house in Franklin Street above the alley, behind which his garden ran back for some distance. . . . [He] was one of the urbanest men that ever touched a hat. If he met you in the morning, the memory of his bland and gracious salutation never departed from you during the day, and seemed to render your sleep sweeter at night. He always treated you as if you were a prince in disguise. . . . He, too, enjoyed the intimate friendship of that great and good man, Doctor Cheverus, who often walked through the old alley. The children welcomed his approach. They respected Don Stoughton; Bishop Cheverus they loved. His very look was a benediction, and the mere glance of his eye was a *Sursum Corda*. That calm, wise, benignant face always had a smile for the little ones who loved the neighborhood of that humble Cathedral, and the pockets of that benevolent prelate never knew a dearth of sugar-plums.<sup>6</sup>

Next to the Stoughtons, the Walley family of Brookline probably stood closest to both the Boston priests. Their house in the country furnished many a day of rest to the rheumatic pastor, especially after the conversion of the head of the family, and was a constant port of call for the Bishop on his way to and from the Southern missions, as well as on frequent other occasions.

<sup>6</sup> Charles B. Fairbanks, *Aguecheek* (Boston, 1859), p. 242.

One of the great friendships of the Bishop's life was that with a French *émigré*, the young Marquis Jean Vernou de Bonneuil, and his wife, Félicie. This also arose out of the Bishop's pastoral work; for, during the Lent of 1814, he had brought faith back into the life of this French nobleman from the West Indies. From then on, the Bishop was like a father to this newly gained son; soon the Father was "Papa" and later even "Nan-pa." This devoted friendship of the Bishop and Vernou, Félicie and their Adé (born April 19, 1814), lasted until the prelate's death in France. The large correspondence to which this friendship gave rise,<sup>7</sup> illustrates as no other records do the goodness of the Bishop's heart, the amiability of his disposition, and the almost incredible warmth of affection which characterized him. He brought the beloved children to Mrs. Walley's as boarders, an arrangement which was a help to both groups, especially after Bonneuil himself returned to Guadeloupe. When the child departed for her parents' home in 1819, a great void was left in the Bishop's heart. The spiritual element that permeated this friendship is illustrated by a passage in one of his letters to Bonneuil. "My dear Son," he wrote, "Religion is what . . . formed the sacred bonds of our friendship. They will be indissoluble. I shall love you on earth until my last breath, and I hope in the mercy of God that we shall love each other forever in Heaven."<sup>8</sup>

Next to the Stoughtons, the Walleys, and the Bonneuils, mention must be made of the Duplessis family. Madame Duplessis, widow of Jean-Armand Duplessis, Captain of the French Navy, had come to reside in Boston in 1811. She and her two daughters were devoted to the Church and the Bishop. They kept a school to support themselves, but were not too successful financially. The younger daughter, "the admiration of all who knew her," died in October, 1812; and on this occasion the Bishop was a veritable instrument of Providence to them. Like the Bonneuils, they were also brought by him into the Walley circle, and were frequent visitors to the "episcopal

<sup>7</sup> Edited in *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, XIV (1903) and XV (1904).

<sup>8</sup> Jan. 26, 1815.

palace," where they rendered him many services.<sup>9</sup> At the time of the illness and death of Father Matignon, they showed untiring devotion. Afterwards, they organized the Bishop's household and were so good as to oversee it.

The new development in the Boston school system, by which, from 1817 onward, the town furnished primary education, evidently cut into their means of livelihood. On different occasions the Bishop aided them by buying wood and probably other supplies for them. He also helped them to reacquire some of their possessions in France, to which they returned in 1823 at the same time as the Bishop himself.<sup>10</sup>

Other Catholic families were also numbered among the Bishop's special friends after the peace. For example, in 1816, he had the happiness of again greeting Mr. de Valnais as French Consul. But some of the old friends he was not to enjoy much longer.

On January 4, 1816, John Magner, that staunch bulwark of the Church here, passed away at the age of eighty-one. Some years before his death, the old gentleman had retired from his blacksmith business and lived on the proceeds of his real estate, for he had prospered with the years and came to possess a very comfortable fortune. With an estate which amounted to some twenty-four thousand dollars, he was easily the richest Catholic in Boston. He had also been a faithful, even militant Catholic from the beginning. His firm adhesion to the Church was also marked in his will. By this he bequeathed one hundred dollars each to Bishop Cheverus and Father Matignon — "to remember me and my deceased family at the altar." He gave his pew to the church, and also a privilege in his tomb for the interment of the priests. His will revealed likewise the union between faith and native land so characteristic of the Irish. It divided the residue of his estate into two equal parts, the first given to

<sup>9</sup> To Bonneuil, Nov. 11, 1817; Oct. 19, 1818.

<sup>10</sup> To Father Bruté, Jan. 5, 1820; to Bonneuil, Oct. 24, 1820; Bishop's private *Account Book*, pp. 13, 25. See *Boston Arch.*, *Liber Mortuorum*, Oct. 29, 1812; Bishop Cheverus to Bonneuil, Nov. 19, 1818; Dec. 27, 1819; Oct. 24, 1820; March 30, 1821; Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Dec. 1, 1815, and Jan. 5, 1820 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

his relatives in Ireland, the second to the three parishes of Capouquin, Lismore, and Modeligo, with which he had been connected in early life. Part of this latter portion of the estate was for the priests to remember him at the altar, and the rest for a fund, "for the schooling of orphan children, and the comfort and support of the poor."<sup>11</sup> In John Magner's passing, the Boston church lost its most colorful layman of that first generation.

In the same year as Magner, another pioneer of the Boston church passed away in the person of Mrs. Mary Lobb, formerly Smithwick, née Connell. She died on September 30, 1816, aged eighty-two. She, too, was truly one of the pioneers. Her name had appeared on the church records earlier even than Magner's; indeed, it stood next to Marguerite Price's as godmother in the baptisms performed by the Abbé de la Poterie in Boston. Mrs. Lobb had been on Father Thayer's side, while Mr. Magner was a leader in the Father Rousselet group, when those two priests had their conflict. Afterwards, she was the hostess to Father Matignon for some years. It was her son, Captain James Smithwick, whose marriage to Elizabeth Jackson led to the famous Newcastle lawsuit. Her Catholic great-grandchildren are still living. Like Magner, Mrs. Lobb also remembered the church in her will, leaving a goodly part of her real estate

to the Rt. Rev. John Cheverus . . . Bishop of the Holy Catholic Church, to his successor and successors in the office of Bishop, Pastor or Teacher of the said Holy Catholic Church for this Diocese, . . . nevertheless in trust . . . solely for the use and relief of the Roman Catholic Church in Boston.<sup>12</sup>

Mrs. Lobb's friend, Mrs. Anne Doyle, also a supporter of Father Thayer, had died two years before, on April 30, 1814.

<sup>11</sup> *Suffolk County Records of Probate.*

*Note:* This fund called the "Magner Charity" still exists and is operative. Letter of the pastor of Lismore, Feb. 4, 1933, which adds, "Of course, when this legacy was left we were still in the penal times and had no Catholic schools; but now, thank God, we have plenty of schools, and the money is spent in providing poor and deserving parents with clothes and boots, to send their little ones to school."

<sup>12</sup> *Probate Records, Suffolk County.*



She was eighty-six years old. William Doyle (Anne's son), died in 1813, aged sixty-two. Charles Leonard, another old-timer, had died in 1813, at the age of seventy-six, almost at the same time as John Sullivan, aged eighty; and John Kiley, aged eighty-seven. In the year 1814, another of the original group, John Lonergan, passed away, at the age of eighty-nine.

Thus, the older group of those who helped begin the church in Boston disappeared. They are too little known by their successors, and thus too little honored, although they were our "founding fathers."

## II

In November, 1815, the Boston public learned of the passing of another of the Catholic pioneers. On the 25th of that month, the *Columbian Centinel* carried a carefully worded death notice. The Rev. Mr. Bentley set down a kind of obituary of him in his *Diary* for November 26th:

We learn the death of John Thayer at Limerick, Ireland. This man was known to me from his youth & a son of Thayer, the Measurer, well known at my G. Father's mills. . . . He was a man who had little in his manners or person to recommend him, but was a real Dreadnought in adventures. He has officiated at my house. But was always thought worse of than he ever deserved. Upon the whole, he was as sincere in religion as in any thing.<sup>13</sup>

The story of Father Thayer's life, from the time he left Boston for Kentucky (1798) until the date of his death (February 17, 1815) in Limerick, Ireland, is both saddening and admirable. His own natural faults brought him into difficulties with both his parishioners and his superiors. An excessive zeal to establish ecclesiastical institutions, particularly Catholic schools, and a realization of the financial needs involved in such a project, resulted in exorbitant financial demands on his new Kentucky parishioners. Outspoken and untimely views on political and social questions, especially on the abolition of

<sup>13</sup> *Diary*, IV, 362-363.

slavery, combined with a certain harshness of word and manner, offset the fruits of his zeal and increased his unpopularity. A general spirit of independence and refusal to accept advice lost him the sympathy of the somewhat severe yet holy Vicar-General, Father Badin. Finally, some indiscretions in deportment brought a suspension of his faculties. When the restoration of these was prevented by his sullen, and certainly, for the time being, unpriestly, flouting of Father Badin's authority, he left America by way of New Orleans for England. He had requested Archbishop Carroll for permission to return to Boston, but did not receive it. When he left America, he had neither *exeat* nor *celebret*: later, he did not use the mere *celebret* which Father Matignon obtained for him from Bishop Carroll. Thus he stayed in London some time without saying Mass.<sup>14</sup>

Both before and after this time, Father Matignon acted as intermediary for him with the Bishop. In doing so, the saintly Boston pastor employed a delicacy, a discretion, and a charity unsurpassed. "I feel, Monseigneur," he wrote to the Bishop on one occasion, "that it is fatiguing and perhaps disagreeable for you to be importuned on this subject." This was on June 18, 1804, when Father Thayer was still in America and wished to return to Boston.

Nevertheless [he continued], you will excuse my solicitations, when you consider that I have obligations to Father Thayer, that I wish to convince him (which he doubts) that I continue to be his sincere friend, and that I am far from working against his return to Boston. . . . It no wise becomes me to specify what you can grant him, but I humbly supplicate you to push your indulgence for him as far as you can without betraying essentials.<sup>15</sup>

Father Matignon wrote the same type of letter to the Bishop even after Father Thayer's departure for London, in November, 1804. It should be noted in passing that Father Thayer himself wrote to Bishop Carroll from New Orleans before he

<sup>14</sup> On some of the above, see Rev. J. L. Spalding, *Sketches of the Early Catholic Missions in Kentucky* (Louisville, 1884), p. 81; Rev. J. G. Shea, *History*, II, 457.

<sup>15</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, June 18, 1804 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 5 H 11).

left the States, and that he also wrote to him from Liverpool, in March, 1805. In this lastnamed letter he told the Bishop that he was "beating up recruits for the mission" in America, and that "all [his] fortune [should] be instantly and unreservedly given up for the comfortable establishment" of those whom he could send. At the same time he asked permission "to bring or send as many priests and nuns as could be provided for." Father Matignon constantly declared his own agreement with the wisdom and moderation of the Bishop's answers; but at the same time he repeated, as regards the priest, "I am sorry for him, I believe him sincere, I believe him penitent, but I neither dare nor even know what to suggest in his favor." Finally, this persistent apostle of priestly charity was able to write to Bishop Carroll: "You have given me, Monseigneur, a mark of confidence, which has exceeded my expectations, in regard to my unfortunate confrère. I shall not exceed your grant of power, but I shall use it as far as you authorize me." Shortly afterwards, Bishop Carroll himself sent Father Thayer a regular certificate of character, etc., signed by himself.<sup>16</sup>

The edification of Father Thayer's conduct everywhere in London, the earnestness of his conversation there, his zeal to bring Protestants to the Catholic faith, amply justified Father Matignon's belief in him.<sup>17</sup> After spending a year in London, and another year at La Trappe (November, 1806, to late 1807) the American priest passed over to Dublin. On his arrival there, not later than early 1808, he exhibited to Archbishop Troy the favorable certificate which he had received from Bishop Carroll, and was granted the usual faculties. While there, he published another edition of his *Conversion* (1809) and a complete edition of his *Controversies* (1809). How long he remained there is not known, but by the 28th of February, 1811, he had moved to Limerick.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> April 6, 1807 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); see also *ibid.*, Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, July 30, 1804; Jan. 28, July 15, Aug. 10, Oct. 10, 1805; Nov. 25, 1806; April 6, 1807.

<sup>17</sup> Father Caron to Bishop Carroll, June 4, 1806 (*ibid.*, 2 L 2).

<sup>18</sup> Leonard Brook to Bishop Carroll, Jan. 31, 1807; Father Plowden to Bishop Carroll, July 28, 1807; Archbishop Troy to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 28, 1811 (all in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*). The Dublin editions of *The Conversion* and *The Controversies* are in St. John's Seminary Library.

Certain details of the priest's last days in Limerick have been preserved. Some folk there who had known him personally told one of his biographers:

He held no charge in Limerick, either as parish priest or curate, but he said Mass and heard confessions in the two principal churches, St. Michael's and St. John's, and often preached. . . . In his old age, he used to say Mass daily in St. Michael's about eleven o'clock, after hearing confessions from seven. He then took his one meal, which was both breakfast and dinner. He kept a perpetual fast and never ate either meat or eggs. During his breakfast, one of the students from Park College used to read to him, by the Bishop's leave. He would never sit near a fire nor allow one in his room. . . . His lodgings . . . were over the shop of Mr. Bourke the glover in Patrick Street and afterwards at Messrs. Ryan Brothers, cloth merchants, at the sign of the Golden Eagles, in the same street, opposite Ellen Street. . . . He had a vast number of penitents, and I have been told that they were nicknamed Thayerites by those who did not relish a piety superior to their own. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Father Thayer left Father Matignon his universal legatee, but prescribed that the latter employ his whole estate for the foundation in Boston or its vicinity of an Ursuline Convent.

This [said Bishop Cheverus in reporting it to a friend] is a difficult thing to do. Father Thayer himself was of the opinion that it would have to wait until the funds could be increased, for, at present, they would not cover the expenses necessary for such an establishment. Therefore, Father Matignon seems determined not to undertake anything along this line for some time. Meanwhile, we have not even a school, and we are too poor to establish one.<sup>20</sup>

On November 20, 1815, Father Thayer's will, made on October 4, 1792, was offered for probate. The inventory of the estate, presented to the probate court, showed a gross valuation of \$10,764, consisting of the Prince Street house estimated

<sup>19</sup> Rev. T. E. Bridgett, *A New England Convert* (London, 1897), pp. 49 ff. See also *Ave Maria*, XVIII (1882), 174 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 23, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).



at \$1,000, and divers stocks.<sup>21</sup> Besides the property bequeathed under this will, there was still more which came into Father Matignon's possession. For on February 1, 1815, Father Thayer had made another will in Limerick, by which he confirmed the previous one made in Boston in 1792. He also added an order to two new executors, the parish priests of St. Mary's, Limerick, and of Thomongate, to sell what he had in Ireland and to transmit the results of the sale and all his papers to his Boston executors. One of the three witnesses to the Limerick will was Catherine M. Ryan.<sup>22</sup>

Bishop Cheverus, of course, eagerly awaited the moment when this fund could be applied to its intended purpose. The establishment of Catholic schools in Baltimore by Archbishop Maréchal recalled to the Bishop of Boston his own lamentable situation in that regard. In writing to the Archbishop, he noted that in Boston the town furnished free schools for the children of both sexes and of all religions. "We try to teach our children by frequent catechism classes; but schools exclusively Catholic would be much preferable."<sup>23</sup>

Father Thayer provided not only the money but also the candidates to begin his beloved Ursuline establishment in Boston. Two daughters and one granddaughter of the Ryan family, in whose home he lived at Limerick, joined the Ursulines here; two of them, Mary and Catherine, came to Boston for the foundation here; and a granddaughter, Catherine Quirk, came out and entered this convent later. Her mother, Anne Ryan Quirk, and an elder sister joined the Ursulines in Limerick. There can be hardly any doubt that all this was due to Father Thayer's advice and direction and to his holy example while he lived in their Limerick home. It is certain that during his lifetime he had acquainted Father Matignon with the hopes and desires of these young women and had recommended them to his care when they should come to America.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Records of Probate, Suffolk County.*

<sup>22</sup> *Limerick Dioc. Arch.* How much actual cash the Limerick executors sent to Father Matignon in Boston does not appear.

<sup>23</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, June 25, 1818 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>24</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis, July 23, 1817 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

In due time, after a delay of almost two years, on account, perhaps, of the last illness and the death of their own father, two of the Ryan girls saw their hopes fulfilled. On May 4, 1817, Mary and Catherine sailed in the ship *Victory* from Limerick to Boston.<sup>25</sup> They landed here on June 15th or 16th and presented themselves to Father Matignon. In the meanwhile, the Boston pastor had arranged that they should make their novitiate in the Ursuline Convent in Three Rivers, Province of Quebec, under Abbé Calonne, the saintly director of that establishment.<sup>26</sup>

On June 23, 1817, Father Matignon set out with the two young women for Canada. Bishop Cheverus informed one of his friends of the event, and added: "Some day they will return to Boston and try to form an establishment. During the seven days that they stayed here, they edified me and seemed to me two worthy girls."<sup>27</sup> From Three Rivers, Father Matignon wrote to Bishop Plessis of Quebec, recommending the two young ladies to that Bishop's esteem and protection. At the same time, he told the Bishop of his expectation that they would be followed, perhaps even the next spring,

by two or three others, who were likewise recommended to me by the respectable director to whom I owe the acquaintance of the first two. The three new ones, like these, were formed by the care of Mr. Thayer, and probably shared his views on the formation of our young establishment. They seem to me, therefore, to possess a kind of right in it. The first ones correspond so perfectly to the idea which their director gave me of them, that I can have only an entire confidence in what he said of the others.<sup>28</sup>

The saintly Father Matignon did not live to learn that in September, 1818, two other novices for the Boston establishment

<sup>25</sup> Bridgett, *A New England Convert*, p. 51.

<sup>26</sup> Perhaps he had done this in Sept., 1815, when he took the trip to Canada, and stayed some time at Three Rivers.

<sup>27</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, June 24, 1817 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>28</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis, Three Rivers, July 23, 1817 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*). Father Matignon visited Nicolet College on the way to Three Rivers and he planned to return by steamboat to Montreal, and make a retreat there (*ibid.*).

arrived at Three Rivers, and that in 1820 all four began Father Thayer's long-anticipated Boston Ursuline Academy.<sup>29</sup>

### III

From the spring of 1815, after the restoration in France and the ending of our war, Father Romagné had half made up his mind to go to France. He was drawn to this partly for reasons of health, because he was much fatigued by his long labors here, and partly for reasons of heart, because it was now over twenty years since he had left home and kinsfolk. News of Napoleon's sudden return had occasioned the temporary abandonment of that plan and given the missionary the opportunity of renewing his work of preparing the Passamaquoddy Indians to receive Confirmation.<sup>30</sup>

After the war, when Bishop Cheverus was preparing to make his then long-delayed visit to them, an occasion for their receiving Confirmation offered itself from another quarter. For Bishop Plessis, of Quebec, planned to visit Boston in the summer of 1815, after his own official visitation to New Brunswick, and it was arranged that he should confirm the Quoddies on his way.<sup>31</sup> In his diary of the visit to Quoddy, the Canadian prelate had many good things to say about Father Romagné. He noted the latter's great facility in the English and Abenaki languages, and his having "all the amiability of manner and all the urbanity which might be expected from one so carefully educated. Modesty, politeness, foresight, attention, delicacy: these are the outstanding traits of his character. How sweet and amiable is the company of such a person. . . ."

The Quebec prelate was informed by Father Romagné that many Penobscots had come to Pleasant Point, not only for the reception of Confirmation, but also to celebrate a national Indian feast. On the whole, some sixty to eighty families greeted

<sup>29</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, Sept., 1818 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>30</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Carroll, May 9, 1815.

<sup>31</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, May 22, June 19, 1815 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*). In this latter document Bishop Cheverus spoke of Father Matignon's being very feeble and his health precarious.

the Bishop on August 29th when he came on shore; and later that day the deputies of the tribe, who had just conducted an election for deputy governor, received the Bishop in their council chamber. The prelate and his party were guests at the banquet which was served according to custom on such an occasion. On the 31st, the Bishop administered Confirmation, and Father Romagné gave the sermon, "which seemed quite long to those who did not understand it," observed the Bishop. Afterwards the Bishop resumed his voyage to Boston.<sup>32</sup>

In the following spring, Father Romagné renewed his plan of going to France. Bishop Cheverus, who feared that if the zealous missionary did leave, it would be for always, regretted it exceedingly, not only on his own account, but because it would be an irreparable loss for the Indians. Father Romagné, however, suddenly changed his mind and again put off his intended departure until the following year.<sup>33</sup> The reason for this new decision is not hard to seek. During the summer of 1816, a great crisis occurred among the Penobscots over the election of a new chief, and the missionary believed it incumbent on himself to aid in overcoming it. In this he was successful.<sup>34</sup>

Again in the following year (1817), Father Romagné put off his departure for France, at least until the next spring. The motive for this new postponement was perhaps a desire to be of service in Boston, because of the question of the coadjutorship, for he spent the winter in Boston, while the Bishop was absent in Baltimore. He returned to his Indians in May, 1818, with continual references to a proximate journey to France. He finally did set off in the autumn, and as Bishop Cheverus had feared, he never returned to this country.<sup>35</sup> His departure

<sup>32</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Journal des visites pastorales de 1815 et 1816*, edited by Msgr. Henri Tétu (Quebec, 1903), pp. 135 ff.

<sup>33</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Bonneuil, July 28, and Aug. 3, 1816.

<sup>34</sup> *History of Penobscot County* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1882), pp. 41, 42.

<sup>35</sup> References in Cheverus-Bonneuil correspondence, Oct. 4, 1817; April 11, May 2, Nov. 19, 1818. Father Romagné baptized in Boston for the last time on August 13, 1818, and sailed from there for France on Aug. 22nd. "He left us with the hope of returning next year, but I doubt it." (Bishop Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, Aug. 26, 1818, *Quebec Dioc. Arch.*). On his return to France, Father Romagné was appointed to the parish of Sacé, in the neighborhood of Mayenne. He said his first Mass as pastor in that parish on Jan. 31, 1819, and



was a great loss to the Indians, who for a long time afterwards, held him in "affectionate remembrance." His reputation was that of a "faithful missionary and a man of unspotted life."

#### IV

Bishop Plessis, after confirming the Indians at Pleasant Point, Maine, made his intended visit to Boston and was deeply impressed by all he saw and heard here. As he recorded in his diary, the town began to take shape before the eyes of the passengers at 8 A.M. It was September 24, 1815.

Everything arouses one's curiosity [he wrote]. A vast harbor, bordered by fortified islands; ships from the four quarters of the world at anchor there, a row of wharfs whose end lies beyond one's view; large, rich shops, three and four stories high, built of brick, like almost all the buildings of the town, and occupying an infinite number of streets; the State House, whose elevated lantern dominates the town; it is six or seven stories high, ending in a dome higher than any of the steeples; churches of all denominations, each seemingly richer than the next in taste and elegance. The whole sight is imposing to strangers as soon as they see this city, and recalls to them its antiquity, the rôle it played in the American Revolution and the high place which its commerce and its wealth give to it among the other cities of the United States. Its population is 36,000. . . .

It was eleven o'clock before the captain landed his impatient passengers, less interested now in the beauty of the buildings and the cleanness of the streets than in getting to the Catholic church and presenting their respects to the Bishop of the place.<sup>36</sup>

Later on, the Quebec prelate put on paper his reflections:

Who would have said, thirty years ago, that the true faith would be known and respected in Boston, the city of all Eng-

died there Nov. 19, 1836. His epitaph in the parish graveyard sums up his pastorate: "His zeal, his charity, his modesty and his sweetness made him loved and respected." (E. De L'Epine, in *Bulletin de la Comm. hist . . . de la Mayenne*, 2e série, X [1895], 223.) By his will he bequeathed 4000 francs to the Bishop of Boston for the church of Boston (Bishop Fenwick, *Memoranda*, Sept. 2, 1837, *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>36</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites pastorales*, p. 145.

lish America the most opposed to Catholicism, the city where, every November, they thought it an act of religion to burn the pope in effigy, and where even the children, imitating what they saw their elders do so lavishly, had their own little popes, which they also threw into the fire, when the citizens had given the same treatment to theirs?

With these words he began his little history of Boston Catholicity, which is the first item in our historiography, and which was undoubtedly based on conversations held during his visit with the two Boston pastors. As befits a diary, it is rather "gossipy," but contains certain valuable personal appreciations. Among them is a characterization of Father Matignon, as a man "whose sweetness of character is equal to the rare ability, which he has manifested in several important matters." Also worth quoting is the French Bishop's appreciation of Father Thayer, "of sustained piety and zeal, but having the talent of fixing himself nowhere." Bishop Plessis' diary also contains a description of the priests' house in Boston, as "Elegant and sufficient, with the kitchens above the ground floor, and two stories besides." And finally, he gives a striking picture of his hosts:

These two respectable clergymen, by their virtue, their talents, their hospitality, and their politeness, have made a way for themselves across the prejudices of the Protestants, and drawn many of them into their congregation. This congregation is, in general, very edifying, and in it these new converts get along very well.<sup>37</sup>

He was able to say:

Monseigneur Cheverus (after he became Bishop) changed nothing in his manner of life and continued to perform, as formerly, all the duties of priest and missionary, always in perfect harmony with Dr. Matignon. They had, for support, only the rental of the pews, which amounts to \$1000, when it is all paid in; out of this, they are obliged to supply the church with light, heat, upkeep, linen and ornaments.

The visiting prelate learned much during his four days' sojourn, which ended with a three-hour visit and lunch at the Walleys'

<sup>37</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 149-151.

in Brookline, where Father Brosius was also a guest. He did not miss recording the fact that there was a beautiful little chapel in the Walleys' home. On his return to Quebec, he took Father Matignon with him.

Since 1792, over a score of years, the Boston pastor had been out of New England only once, and then in order to collect money for the Boston church; he had been to Maine twice, once to make arrangements for the new church there, and once to replace the Bishop-elect, who was preparing for his consecration. Otherwise, during his twenty-three years he had limited his journeys to the coastal sections between Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Newport, Rhode Island. This trip to Canada was, therefore, an event for him.<sup>38</sup> In Three Rivers the party was joined by the Abbé Ciquart, Father Matignon's former fellow passenger from Europe and co-laborer in New England. In the intervening years, the Abbé had been missionary in New Brunswick and later to the Abenakis at St. François du Lac. He was now about to retire from his labors and spend the rest of his years in the Seminary in Montreal.

It was on the trip north with the Bishop of Quebec that Father Matignon learned of an opportunity to found a mission at Burlington, Vermont. One of his fellow passengers on the sloop was a Burlington woman, who had Catholic relatives. On arriving at Burlington, she invited the party to supper in her house. Bishop Plessis wrote in his diary about the incident that

the naïve goodness of this woman, born a Protestant, and not knowing what she is now, gave rise to hopes of her becoming a Catholic, if she had anybody to instruct her; and her attractive children would, without fail, follow her example. There were also at Burlington some Canadian families, making about a hundred Catholics. With a two or three weeks'

<sup>38</sup> Bishop Plessis to Bishop Cheverus, Sept. 25, 1815 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

*Note:* Father Matignon and Bishop Plessis' party had gone by stage (mail-coach) from Boston through Worcester and Hartford to New Haven, thence by steamer to New York; again by steamer up the Hudson to Albany, by stage to Whitehall, and thence by boat to Burlington and St. John, finally to Montreal and thence to Three Rivers. (*Visites pastorales*, pp. 155-172.)

mission every year, a little church could be formed, with consoling results to whomsoever would undertake its care. . . .<sup>39</sup>

Father Matignon decided to stop there some days on his return from Canada, which, in fact, he did.

At Burlington, on Sunday, October 15, 1815, he baptized or supplied with baptismal ceremonies some eighteen children, whose ages ran from eleven years down. They were all members of French families: Longeuil, Bolac, Pelletier, Desjardins, Aller, Archambault, Dénault, and Prudhomme.<sup>40</sup>

## V

Father Matignon returned to Boston on October 19th. On December 9, 1815, the *Columbian Centinel* carried an obituary notice of Archbishop Carroll. It was headed "Another Worthy No More," and began: "On the 3d inst. departed this life in Baltimore, the Most Reverend John Carroll, D.D., Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America, aged LXXX." The item then gave a short summary of the deceased prelate's career, marking his part in the Revolutionary War, and concluded with the most sympathetic appreciation:

His talents and learning were eminent: his deportment a model of the clerical character, dignified yet simple, pious but not ascetic. He lived respected and beloved; and has died greatly lamented: particularly by the poor.

The *Boston Gazette* (December 11, 1815) likewise noted the event, and spoke of the Archbishop as "universally esteemed in life and now sincerely lamented in death." No Boston paper mentioned his two visits to this city or recalled the unique welcome extended to him when he first came. None, of course, took the opportunity to measure the change in Boston's attitude to Catholicity between the time of that first visit and his death.

Archbishop Carroll by his will, drawn November 22, 1815, left to his "much esteemed and respected friend, Rt. Rev. John

<sup>39</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites*, p. 169.

<sup>40</sup> *Baptismal Register of Boston Cathedral*.



Cheverus, his heirs and assigns," all the Archbishop's rights, title, or interest in and to "the lot of ground in Boston, Massachusetts, on which is built the Catholick Church of the Holy Cross" and "all Appurtenances thereunto belonging."<sup>41</sup> Thus, all the church property in Boston was henceforth held in the name of the Bishop and the pastor, and none in the name of any lay trustees.

The Archbishop was succeeded by his former Coadjutor, Archbishop Neale, and the post thus vacated was soon offered to Bishop Cheverus. The documentary story of this highly complimentary incident reveals the request made by the new Jesuit Archbishop for either a secular or a Sulpician as his successor; it manifests the high esteem in which Bishop Cheverus was held by the American clergy; and pictures a unique rivalry between two episcopal nominees, each striving for the other's appointment. It begins with a letter of Archbishop Neale to Bishop Cheverus, dated December 3, 1815, and containing the official notice of the venerable Archbishop Carroll's death. At the same time Archbishop Neale requested the Bishop of Boston to name some candidate who could be recommended to the Holy See for the sacred and important office of coadjutor, declaring his own satisfaction with the Rev. Ambrose Maréchal of St. Sulpice, then professor of the Baltimore Seminary. Bishop Cheverus, in his answer dated December 11, 1815, cordially concurred with His Grace and united with him in recommending Father Maréchal.<sup>42</sup>

Shortly thereafter, on February 4, 1816, to be exact, the Archbishop wrote to Propaganda on the matter. He informed the Sacred Congregation that the other Bishops of the Province desired Bishop Cheverus for the office, and that their desires and wishes in this matter were seconded by the whole clerical body of the Diocese of Baltimore. The Archbishop then continued:

And this I acknowledge would be most pleasing to me personally, not only because I entertain a very special friendship

<sup>41</sup> Copy in *Baltimore Sem. Arch.*

<sup>42</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 H 3.

for the Bishop of Boston, but because he is a prelate of long experience in episcopal functions, and eminent learning, enjoying excellent health and strength, zealous in the care of souls, remarkable for his eloquence, and full of charm and charity. . . . But [he went on in his letter] what would become of Boston? Perhaps it would please His Holiness to administer it, for the time being, by a Vicar Apostolic, on account of the small number of Catholics there, until, with the increase of Priests in this region, a proper subject could more easily be found than at present to fill that see worthily and fruitfully.

However, in case His Holiness should decide not to make the Bishop of Boston the Coadjutor of Baltimore, the Archbishop suggested as his second choice the Rev. Ambrose Maréchal, who was also the second choice of the Bishops and of the clergy of Baltimore.<sup>43</sup>

Propaganda, by its letter of July 20, 1816, stated that it had no objection to making Bishop Cheverus coadjutor of Baltimore,

but [it added], lest the See of Boston be deprived of a Pastor, you should, as soon as possible, indicate to us someone who could be appointed to Boston; for it does not seem expedient to leave that diocese, so recently established, without a Bishop. The office of coadjutor cannot be given to the other person whom you proposed, Rev. Ambrose Maréchal, for he has been raised to the Bishopric of Philadelphia.<sup>44</sup>

In this same letter Propaganda also informed Archbishop Neale that it had already forwarded the pallium to him.

The Archbishop then immediately invited Bishop Cheverus to do the investing, but said nothing at that time about the coadjutorship. Bishop Cheverus in turn replied with fitting appreciation of the invitation, but with the respectful suggestion that it be offered instead to the Bishop of New York. Despite the Boston prelate's reluctance, he was naturally pressed

<sup>43</sup> Archbishop Neale to Propaganda, Feb. 4, 1816 (*Arch. Prop. Fide, Scritt. Rif.; Am. Cent.*, III, ff. 360-364, kindness of Dr. Guilday).

<sup>44</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fide, Lettere*, vol. 297, f. 171, v; see also *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 Q 2.

to accept the invitation, and only when he arrived at Georgetown where the Archbishop was living did he learn from him about the coadjutorship. On hearing this news he almost "died with amazement,"<sup>45</sup> and at once found many reasons for refusing. During the week he spent with the Archbishop before the actual ceremony of investiture (November 24th), he finally put these into form for transmission to Rome. The first was as follows: "The beloved church of Boston has become my spouse, and it has never entered my mind to leave her a widow, even though she is very poor."

Besides, Bishop Cheverus set forth some serious difficulties that would follow his abandoning Boston, especially in what regarded a successor. Father Matignon could not succeed him, he said, for that venerable priest's infirm state of health, which had been the only obstacle to his becoming the first Bishop of Boston, was now even more pronounced. To appoint a person unknown in Boston would, at that moment, Bishop Cheverus continued, cause the flock "a great injury." Furthermore, there was no need of his being made the Coadjutor of Baltimore. A proper person for that office could be chosen among the priests of that Diocese, many of whom, he declared,

I sincerely believe to be much more worthy than I am. Especially among the Fathers of the Society of Jesus there are men whose outstanding talents, religious devotion, zeal and labors . . . can never be sufficiently commended. . . . There are also truly apostolic priests in the Seminary of Baltimore.<sup>46</sup>

Bishop Cheverus tentatively agreed with the Archbishop to consider the offer only if, during the latter's life, he himself could retain the title and rôle of Bishop of Boston and confine his work in Baltimore to ordaining, confirming, and so forth.<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile he had consulted Father Matignon by letter, and

<sup>45</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Neale, Oct. 3, Nov. 5, 1816 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); F. Tessier, *Epoques du Séminaire de Baltimore*, p. 55 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*). In Baltimore, Bishop Cheverus stayed at the Seminary; Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Oct. 9, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>46</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fid.*, *Am. Cent.*, III, 512-513, Nov. 24, 1816.

<sup>47</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Neale, Dec. 3, 1816, and Father Maréchal to the Archbishop, Dec. 11, 1816; see below.

received the answer on December 3rd. In this he was "pressed and solicited" to yield to the Archbishop's wishes on the grounds that Father Maréchal would probably be forced to take Philadelphia and that Bishop Cheverus would be the best friend and protector of Baltimore Seminary available.<sup>48</sup> On the very same day the Boston prelate wrote to the Archbishop a letter of acceptance on the conditions already agreed on.<sup>49</sup>

He left Baltimore finally on December 11th. It is of interest to note that as a result of his consultations with Father Maréchal, he had come to the conclusion that if and when he should be compelled by the Archbishop's death to assume the title and the full duties of Archbishop, no successor would be needed at Boston. A simple vicar-general would, he thought, suffice there for many years. Indeed,

he would be very glad [he declared] if the first plan which the late Monseigneur Carroll communicated to him would be put into effect, namely, that there should be only three Bishops in the United States, one in Kentucky, one at Baltimore (who would administer Philadelphia also), and the third at New York, who would govern both his own diocese and that of Boston.<sup>50</sup>

That news came from Father Maréchal, who was then Bishop-elect of Philadelphia, but reluctant to accept that post.<sup>51</sup> He was on the other hand eager that Bishop Cheverus become the Coadjutor of Baltimore, and he used what influence he had in Europe to promote that desire.<sup>52</sup>

When the Archbishop was writing his report to Rome on the compromise plan worked out between him and Bishop Cheverus, suddenly, in the very middle of his letter, he broke

<sup>48</sup> Father Maignon to Father Maréchal, Sept. 15, 1817 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>49</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Neale, Dec. 3, 1816 (*Fordham Arch.*, 205 W 19).

<sup>50</sup> Father Maréchal to Archbishop Neale, Dec. 11, 1816 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 A J 3).

<sup>51</sup> Father Maréchal to Cardinal Litta, Dec. 11, 1816 (*Arch. Prop. Fide. Kindness of Dr. Guilday*).

<sup>52</sup> Father Maréchal to Father Cortal, Superior of Seminary at Bordeaux, Dec. 8, 1816 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).



off with the words, "Thanks be to God. Whilst I was writing, there came to hand the letter of Your Eminence, dated August 17th, 1816." The letter to which he referred contained Rome's solution of the difficulty. It stated that Father Maréchal was to be freed from Philadelphia and appointed to the coadjutorship of Baltimore. Thus the Seminary of Baltimore could still be supervised by him and the wishes of Archbishop Neale, who had asked for Father Maréchal as his second choice, could be satisfied. Also the injury to Boston by removing Bishop Cheverus would be avoided.<sup>53</sup> The old Archbishop, to whom this plan appeared like a divine intervention, at once sent to Rome the expression of his joy and a request for Father Maréchal's immediate appointment.<sup>54</sup>

The Boston prelate's letter to Father Maréchal was a peal of joyous relief.

My very dear Seigneur [he wrote], I do not congratulate you, certainly; but I do congratulate the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Baltimore, and I also congratulate with sincere joy the Bishop of Boston on your nomination. A kind Providence arranges everything for the best: you must submit to it. . . . Father Matignon presents you his respects and congratulates himself also.<sup>55</sup>

Bishop Cheverus' letter to the Archbishop, written the same day, was in a similar strain:

A letter from the dear and worthy Mr. Maréchal has just reached me. I congratulate you and the church on his appointment. . . . I feel a great deal easier than I have done since I left you. I hope now to finish my days in the midst of my dear children here, and I really believe that your diocese is better provided for than by giving it a divorced Bishop. I shall now

<sup>53</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fide, Lettere*, vol. 297, fol. 200. Archbishop Neale's letter is in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 S 1, also in *Arch. Prop. Fide, Scritt. Rif., Am. Cent.*, III, 396 ff.

<sup>54</sup> Father Maréchal had already heard the news unofficially from his friend Father Garnier on Jan. 11, 1817. He was in consternation at it (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 A J 4). Father Garnier's letter (*ibid.*, 17 C 9) shows that Propaganda acted on the advice of Bishop Du Bourg of New Orleans.

<sup>55</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 H 3.

never consent to part from my dear Spouse, the church of Boston. I felt extremely unhappy ever since I gave even a half and reluctant consent. I shall however always retain a grateful sense of the confidence and friendship with which you have honoured me. You are continually in my prayers and in my heart.<sup>56</sup>

For Bishop Cheverus, it was the liberation from "a great disquietude."<sup>57</sup> As he confessed to an intimate friend, he had been "in hot water" from the time he gave his reluctant consent at Baltimore until "the refreshing news" of Father Maréchal's nomination.<sup>58</sup>

He still had the duty to write to Propaganda. This he fulfilled on February 7, 1817, saying that he had returned to Boston a few days before Christmas, heavy in heart, lest the obedience he owed to the Holy See should force him to leave his beloved flock.

But now peace and joy have taken the place of fear and anxiety. . . . I now request, nay, I earnestly supplicate, that I never be ordered to leave my Spouse in Christ, the church of Boston. May I be allowed ever to watch over this flock, beloved tho small, and for it to spend and be spent.<sup>59</sup>

From Bishop Cheverus' viewpoint the incident was finished; but the newly nominated Coadjutor felt otherwise. Thereupon ensued a marvelous exhibition of holy emulation. Father Maréchal used every means he possessed to prevent the execution of the new plan. He even wrote to Propaganda, praising the previous plan in all regards, wondering why it could be overturned by one Bishop (Du Bourg, of New Orleans), against the wishes of all the others, etc., etc.<sup>60</sup> All to no avail! Father

<sup>56</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Neale, Feb. 3, 1817 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 12 L 3).

<sup>57</sup> To Bishop Plessis, April 2, 1817 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>58</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 24, 1817 (*Notre Dame Arch.*); cf. also the Bishop to Mrs. Seton, Nov. 28, 1816 (*Emmitsburg Arch.*).

<sup>59</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Cardinal Litta, Feb. 7, 1817 (*Arch. Prop. Fide, Scritt. Rif., Am. Cent.*, III, 416-417); cf. Bishop Cheverus to Father Maréchal, Feb. 18, 1817 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 H 4).

<sup>60</sup> March 15, June 25, 1817 (*Arch. Prop. Fid., Am. Cent.*, III, 549; *ibid.*, III, 600).

Maréchal was finally appointed Coadjutor, with the right of succession, and as Archbishop Neale had died in the meantime, he at once became Archbishop of Baltimore. Bishop Cheverus consecrated and installed him on December 10, 1817.

## VI

During the negotiations with Rome about the coadjutorship, much had been said, and truly, about the weakness of the Diocese of Boston. It plainly appears in the official report, which Bishop Cheverus sent to Propaganda on February 7, 1817:

In the city of Boston is the Church of the Holy Cross, which serves as a Cathedral. Its bell-tower is surmounted by a gilded cross. It is not lacking in sacred vessels, vestments or other things which pertain to the decent performance of divine service. Besides the Bishop, there is only one priest (in the city), the Rev. Francis Ant. Matignon. There is also Mr. Denis Ryan, an Irishman, recently made deacon and soon to be raised to the priesthood. He made his theological studies in the episcopal residence, where he lives with the Bishop and the priest. The offerings of the faithful and the small payments made for the pews in the Church hardly suffice for food and clothing to this body of clergy, but we are content. The number of those who receive Holy Communion is more than 400 in the city, in the surrounding towns and country-side, about 100. In the Province of Maine, in the place called Newcastle, which lies 180 miles from Boston, there is a neat and fitting church built a few years ago, and dedicated to St. Patrick: 150 persons receive Holy Communion there. The largest part of these reside on farms in a radius of one to thirty miles from the church, and thus the necessity lies on the priest of hearing confessions and celebrating Mass in their houses. The priest is received hospitably, but hitherto has been given no house of his own nor any personal offering. A few acres of land were purchased, which, I hope, will in the future, be able to supply a residence and support to the priest. The Bishop himself acts as the only missionary in these parts, for two or three months in the summer. In winter, these people are served by

their pastor, the Rev. James René Romagné, who has also busied himself for now seventeen years, ministering faithfully and zealously to the aborigines, who are called Indians (but now worn out with the arduous labor, intends to return to France. I intend to replace him by Rev. Denis Ryan).

There are two of these tribes, the Penobscots and the Passamaquoddies. In each about 100 persons are permitted to approach the holy table. The government of the State of Massachusetts grants the priest an annual stipend of 350 dollars, but whether the same stipend will be given a new priest is very uncertain.

In the other New England States, viz. in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont, there is no Catholic church or chapel; there are almost no Catholics, and consequently not even one priest.

Some conversions from heresy to the Catholic faith have taken place. Among these was that of Thomas Walley, member of an important family and notable for his culture, who, together with his wife and ten children, makes up a family, pleasing to God and man in this city. Last August there was another conversion, this one of Samuel Bishop, an attorney-at-law, forty-five years old, who, in St. Patrick's church in Newcastle, on a Sunday before a large gathering of people, renounced heresy, made profession of the faith, was baptized, confirmed and given holy communion.

I am overcome with shame at the little accomplished hitherto, but there is now hope of much fruit. In this city and in other places where a few years ago, the name Catholic Church was, so to speak, infamous, and that of Priest, abhorred, we are now looked on with veneration and friendship, kindly regarded and kindly treated.

The Socinian heresy has many followers here, under the name of Unitarians, among the Protestant ministers, in the University of Cambridge, etc. A large number of the inhabitants both live and alas, also die, without baptism.<sup>61</sup>

The Bishop had not emphasized to the Sacred Congregation the poverty of the Diocese, nor made clear that this was, in

<sup>61</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Cardinal Litta, *Arch. Prop. Fid., etc., Am. Cent.*, III, 416, 417; see also for duplicate June 18, 1817, *ibid.*, 455, new no. 596.



great part, why it had so few priests and therefore possibly such small success. On this subject, he might well have set forth to the Cardinal Prefect what he had told Archbishop Neale and what he soon had occasion to tell one of his friends:

Among other obstacles, one which also prevents my doing many other things is the lack of pecuniary means. Without this obstacle, I would do all I could to procure one or two priests, but I have no resources for their living. I have received some help from my family, but that is all spent. I trust in Providence, but I believe that I should not contract debts which perhaps would never be paid.<sup>62</sup>

Bishop Cheverus' situation in Boston was little different from that faced by the Bishop of New York: insufficient priests, insufficient revenue to obtain or support others. Bishop Connolly had arrived in New York at the end of 1815 and found there some thirteen thousand Catholics of whom eleven thousand were Irish or descendants of Irish. He had only four priests to assist him, three Jesuits and one Dominican, and he was soon deprived of two of the Jesuits. In the whole Diocese, which embraced half of the State of New Jersey as well as all the State of New York, there were but three churches, two in New York City and one in Albany. The Cathedral in New York was burdened with a debt of fifty-three thousand dollars, bearing interest at seven per cent. The payment of this took about one-half of all the available revenue and put the Bishop in the impossibility of supporting enough priests for the city and of trying to start a seminary. Bishop Connolly reported to the Holy See that even if he had the seminary it would still be impossible to find American youths to profit by it.<sup>63</sup>

In the matter of immigration, New York had by far the advantage. Together with Philadelphia, it was the large port of landing for Irish immigrants, who were coming to the United States at the rate of five to ten thousand yearly. And, although hardly one quarter of these remained in the port of entry, this one quarter amounted in New York to some two or three thou-

<sup>62</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Oct. 9, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>63</sup> Bishop Connolly to Propaganda, Feb. 25, 1818 (*Dr. Guilday's Collection*).

sand persons. The town of Boston increased by much less than a thousand annually. The baptisms recorded in the Boston book for the years 1815, 1816, 1817, and 1818 were respectively 131, 123, 159, and 136. In the same years the marriages numbered 26, 35, 20, and 21.

Bishop Cheverus, however, enjoyed a special advantage over the other dioceses of the country. The Irish congregation in Boston had no anti-French feeling. Whatever the sentiment in Norfolk, Virginia, or Charleston, South Carolina, the Boston Irish loved their French priests, respected and obeyed them. Nor was the small Boston congregation of Irish Catholics divided against itself, as the Philadelphia group was, and as the New York group would be. True, indeed, they had for their Bishop a Frenchman, who, it happened, was one of the best, if not *the* best pulpit orator in America. True also that they had as pastor one whom I dare call the saintliest, as well as the most learned priest in America. If the Boston clergy knew how to treat the Boston Catholics, these latter in turn knew how to love and venerate their spiritual guides. Not one single conflict between clergy and people here has come to notice. There was here neither racism nor trusteeism. The story of these three years after the war, like that of all the years since the coming of Father Matignon, were years of unity and devotion, although they were years of poverty and sacrifice.

## VII

One of the war's by-products took the form of bringing to our shores a seminarian. He was bound from Ireland to Quebec in a British ship which was captured by an American privateer, and he was brought to Boston as a prisoner of war. This was in October, 1814. When the war was over, and the seminarian, together with the other passengers, was released, Bishop Cheverus took him into the priests' house to continue his preparation for the priesthood. He was then twenty-eight years old, had studied philosophy and divinity during a year at Carlow College in Ireland, and had received the tonsure.

His name was Dennis Ryan. Of mild manners and sincerely pious, although not brilliant in talent, he appeared to the Bishop a welcome prospect for the priesthood. In particular, he might prove a useful assistant to Father Matignon when the Bishop was away from Boston. Therefore, the Bishop sent to Kilkenny for an exeat for the young man and ordained him to minor orders. However, he finally had to go off to Maine in the summer of 1816, leaving Mr. Ryan still in minor orders, and unable to give Father Matignon as much help as had been anticipated, because of a serious ulcer.<sup>64</sup> In the following spring, when the ulcer had been cured, the Bishop ordained him to the diaconate. He invited the congregation to be present and accompanied the ceremony with fitting instructions, all of which seemed to have made an impression.<sup>65</sup> The Bishop then ordained him priest at Trinity, May 31, 1817.

At first, the new priest was employed in the Cathedral, assisting Father Matignon, while the Bishop continued his mission labors. Father Ryan first baptized in Boston on July 20, 1817, and he continued to help in the town until April, 1818, when he was sent on the mission in Maine. He did good work there and was both respected and loved.<sup>66</sup>

In the autumn of 1817, the Bishop acquired another possible seminarian. He was a young Irishman named James Cumisky. For some reason, now unknown (probably because Father Ryan was still in the house), the Bishop, instead of keeping him in Boston and doing for him what he had done for Father Ryan, sent him to St. Mary's in Baltimore. The newcomer began his studies in theology there on November 17, 1817, and was finally ordained a priest; but not for this Diocese. He attached himself to Philadelphia.<sup>67</sup>

In the following year, however, the Bishop again brought

<sup>64</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Oct. 9, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>65</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 24, 1817. March 23 was Passion Sunday.

<sup>66</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Oct. 28, 1818 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>67</sup> Ruane, *Beginnings of St. Sulpice*, p. 193; see also Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Nov. 3, 1817 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

into his house another Irish student, Patrick Byrne, also from Kilkenny, and prepared him for the ministry as he had prepared Father Ryan. He, too, was destined to be ordained and to work for many years in this Diocese.<sup>68</sup>

Before the end of the year 1818, the diocesan clergy was further increased by the arrival of a young Frenchman, the Abbé Cailleaux. He was already in major orders, and offered himself as successor to Father Romagné if the Bishop would ordain him. The latter took him into the priests' house to join his other seminarian. In regard to this, he took occasion to remark, "My house is a little seminary. I am superior, professor of theology, etc., etc."<sup>69</sup>

At Pentecost time (May 10, 1818), just after Father Ryan went to Maine, Bishop Cheverus also obtained another priest for the Diocese in the person of the Irish Augustinian, Rev. Philip Lariscy. This priest, who was then thirty-four years old, had spent three years at St. John's, Newfoundland, and had passed seven months at Halifax. His papers and other testimonials were quite regular and honorable. On June 25, 1818, Bishop Cheverus wrote of him:

He is strong and robust, zealous and pious. He has already brought back some hardened sinners. He preaches in Irish every Sunday at the first Mass and he handles his own people without any delicacy. He has also preached for us in English, but a little too much *in terrorem*. I told him to use moderation and he did it last Sunday. He is a humble man and asks nothing except work. He intends to stay here at least during the summer.<sup>70</sup>

As a matter of fact, he stayed much longer than that. At first, he took over the Salem mission, where in the autumn the Catholics were able through the good offices of Mr. Bentley to obtain for their services the use of "the apartment in the second story over the corner of Essex and Union Streets."<sup>71</sup> In No-

<sup>68</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Bishop Plessis, Aug. 26, 1818 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*); and Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Oct. 28, 1818 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>69</sup> To Bishop Plessis, Dec., 1818 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*); to Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 7, 1819 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>70</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, June 25, and Oct. 7, 1818 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>71</sup> Bentley, *Diary*, IV, 552.



vember, 1818, the Bishop used Father Lariscy mostly for Boston, because he found himself with still another priest available and desired by the Salem Catholics. He was the Rev. Paul McQuade, also of Irish birth.<sup>72</sup>

In 1813, Father McQuade had been in Albany and shown himself a holy and zealous missionary there. He was the type of priest who could not be controlled by self-seeking trustees, but who suffered so much from them that by the autumn of 1815 he successfully petitioned the Bishop of Quebec for a place in that Diocese.<sup>73</sup> In the following year Father McQuade was established at St. John, New Brunswick, where he remained until he came to Boston.<sup>74</sup> Before the 14th of November, 1818, he came to Bishop Cheverus to offer his services, probably at the instance of some Salem Catholics. The Bishop gladly consented and gave him faculties.<sup>75</sup> He was the resident priest at Salem for nearly five years.

During this period the Salem Catholics had been slowly collecting funds for a church. One of their number, Matthew Newport, had been made a prisoner during the War of 1812, and incarcerated in an English prison. When, in 1815, he returned to Salem "in the fervor of his zeal, he commenced collecting from house to house." Associated with him in this work were Mr. Gilman, the sacristan, John Simon, and Firmin Ottignon. In April, 1817, the Bishop sold the lot which the Catholics already owned in view of their purpose to secure a more suitable one.<sup>76</sup>

## VIII

Up to the time when the Bishop could send Father Ryan to Maine, he himself continued to care for that mission every

<sup>72</sup> Wallace to Father Grassi, July 23, 1813 (*Fordham Arch.*, 204 W 4).

<sup>73</sup> Bishop Plessis, *Visites*, p. 103.

<sup>74</sup> Father McQuade to Bishop Plessis, Oct. 30, 1816; Jan. 19, Feb. 4, Dec. 4, 1817, March 7, 1818, etc. (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*). Father McQuade's first baptism in Boston occurred on Nov. 20, 1818.

<sup>75</sup> To Bentley, Nov. 28, 1818 (Rev. L. S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, p. 22).

<sup>76</sup> Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 135; Rev. L. S. Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

summer. A sample of his work there is found in his activities in 1816. On Friday, June 28th, he boarded a boat in Boston for Wiscasset, where he stayed over Sunday. He was invited to preach publicly in the town, but he declared, "I didn't have the courage and restricted myself to a dozen Catholics, large and small." The next day he took the stage to Newcastle; during the journey a wheel on the stage broke down, causing no other damage than a delay of an hour and a half. He arrived at Newcastle at seven-thirty that night. The rest of the week was spent in visits in Newcastle. Sunday after church, he started on his stations, to each of which he devoted two weeks, returning to the home church every other Sunday. On Sunday, July 28th, he was at Whitefield, and later gave an account of his labors there:

That morning he said Mass and gave Communion to eighteen persons in a room of a log house; the crowd inside and outside was such as to oblige him to choose for his cathedral in the afternoon a half finished barn; here, he preached, and afterwards baptized five babies. That morning also two old men who, although raised as Catholics had heretofore proved obstinate, had gone to confession and had authorized the Bishop to announce publicly their return and repentance. On the following Sunday, August 4th, at Newcastle, he baptized and confirmed and gave Holy Communion to Mr. Samuel Bishop, a lawyer of education and a man of judgment. Mr. Bishop was forty-six years old, had a wife and three children, and had been studying and reflecting three years on the idea of becoming a Catholic. He wept with emotion during the whole ceremony, at which several of his colleagues were present. May they follow his example! [was the Bishop's ardent wish].<sup>77</sup>

The Bishop spent the rest of August that year in the mission, visiting and baptizing in Bath, Waldoboro, Jefferson, Union, and Hope. He went again in 1817, during the months of September and October, and followed his usual round; but that was his last regular performance of those arduous duties in Maine. His next visit was in 1820.

<sup>77</sup> To Bonneuil, June 28, July 4, July 28, and Aug. 5, 1816.

## IX

During the four years after the war the Catholic centres of the Rhode Island mission were visited at least once a year. Father Matignon, for example, was in Providence, Bristol, and Portsmouth in the last days of May, 1815; Bishop Cheverus himself made the only other recorded visits of those years. In 1816, his sojourn embraced at least four days at the end of April; in 1817, he spent at least five days there at the beginning of May; in 1818, he baptized in Providence in early January.

Besides the places where he baptized, Bishop Cheverus also visited the Coal Mines, three miles from Bristol, and at least on one occasion said Mass there (May 4, 1817). On his visit in 1817 he was to baptize a child in the McLean family. The mother of the child, a French woman and a zealous Catholic, requested that the child be called Napoleon. The Bishop refused to comply, and they compromised on the name Nicholas. On this occasion the Protestant bishop, Dr. Griswold, who resided in Bristol, was present, undoubtedly because he was a friend of the McLean family. Bishop Griswold listened to Bishop Cheverus, as the latter gave his usual instructions before and after administering the Sacrament. When, afterwards, the Catholic prelate engaged the guest in conversation, he found him timid and embarrassed.<sup>78</sup>

According to an apparently well-grounded tradition, however, the Protestant prelate invited Bishop Cheverus to preach on Sunday in his church. The story goes that Bishop Griswold, "to gratify the universal desire to hear a prelate of such reputation for piety," sent a complimentary message by one of his students and placed the Episcopal church in town at Bishop Cheverus' service. The invitation was accepted with characteristic simplicity and courtesy and, after brief devotion, the Roman Catholic Bishop preached from Bishop Griswold's pulpit. This was in the year 1817, or 1818.<sup>79</sup>

Bishop Cheverus himself did not mention this occurrence.

<sup>78</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, May 1, 1817.

<sup>79</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VIII (1891), 187.

On Saturday, May 3, 1817, however, he casually declared that he had been invited to preach on the next afternoon in the courthouse at Bristol. He did not state whether or not he accepted that invitation; surely, if there had been question of Episcopal church or Episcopal bishop, he would have been more specific.<sup>80</sup> The incident probably happened in 1818.

It is possible that in this period Bishop Cheverus visited the Rhode Island mission on other occasions than those mentioned. These other visits, however, could hardly have been frequent. From the available evidence it may be concluded that the Rhode Island mission was then making but little progress.

Early in 1816, the Bishop tried to obtain a certain Father Fitzpatrick to care for the Vermont mission; but arrangements fell through, and the mission was served from time to time by Father Mignault, of Chambly, Lower Canada.<sup>81</sup>

## X

The post-war period was the only period in Bishop Cheverus' tenure in Boston in which he was in direct communication with Rome. On account of the extreme difficulty of having relations with the Holy See during the years of war in Europe, the first known letter by the Bishop of Boston to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda was the one already cited about the coadjutorship.

Nevertheless, the Boston prelate had previously entertained views not wholly favorable about the Sacred Congregation's dealings with the American Church. Those views had to do mostly with the appointment to the episcopate in the United States of persons other than those recommended by the American hierarchy. This was the case, for example, in 1815, when he learned of the appointment of Bishop Connolly to the See of New York.<sup>82</sup> The personal relations, however, between the two prelates were exceedingly gracious. Bishop Cheverus was

<sup>80</sup> To Bonneuil, May 3, 1817.

<sup>81</sup> To Bishop Plessis, March 28, 1816; Dec., 1818.

<sup>82</sup> To Archbishop Carroll, May 11, May 22, 1815.



invited by the new Bishop of New York to install him, and he spent a pleasant although busy Christmas tide in the Metropolis. In reporting this to the Bishop of Quebec, Bishop Cheverus declared that the New York incumbent possessed "piety, knowledge, amiability — everything, in fact, except physical strength."<sup>83</sup> He might have added that this same New York prelate advocated him as the new Coadjutor of Baltimore. The Boston prelate, therefore, had good personal reasons to be satisfied with Rome's appointment to New York; his opposition was based on the procedure.

Another part of the Boston Bishop's dissatisfaction with Propaganda had to do with that Congregation's receiving appeals from American priests against their bishops, and acting upon them favorably without even consulting the bishop involved. This was exemplified in the Charleston case,<sup>84</sup> which touched Dr. Cheverus in a double manner, first as a Bishop and then as a Frenchman. The Charleston malcontents alleged that the American hierarchy was hostile to Irish and English priests, but unduly favorable to French priests. Bishop Cheverus wrote to Propaganda denying the allegation.

The fact is that the bishops here exercise no undue favoritism. They esteem and even venerate priests who are commendable for piety, zeal, and learning, whatever their nationality; but they are, and always will be opposed to those who are addicted to drink, gaming or other vices. . . . [He cited the case of the young Irishman, Dennis Ryan], whom [he said] we have kindly received as a guest and a beloved son into our household and supported and taught (and ordained deacon and shall soon promote to the priesthood). . . . Here your Eminence has an example of the method which the French employ to exclude the . . . Irish. With the same charity, not a few who have come from Ireland have . . . been received into the Seminary of Baltimore and at Georgetown. [He then concluded by saying frankly] there is no danger that the bishops in this country will overstep the righteous bounds of their authority.

<sup>83</sup> To Bishop Plessis, March 28, 1816.

<sup>84</sup> Guilday, *Life of Rev. John Carroll*, p. 739.

The danger lies, as experience has shown, in laymen, nominal Catholics, who are Protestant in spirit, disregarding entirely the episcopal authority.<sup>85</sup>

It was from these letters of Bishop Cheverus that Cardinal Litta, Prefect of the Congregation, learned of the American bishops' side of the Charleston case. In his answer he asserted that the Congregation's action, based only on the evidence presented by the priests, was taken to avert what seemed an imminent evil. He also, by implication, laid down the rule that, in order to prevent like incidents in the future, American bishops should keep Rome informed of their actions.<sup>86</sup>

Within three weeks, however, the Holy Father himself, having received Archbishop Neale's letter on the case, at once dismissed the priests' appeal, and declared that he confirmed whatever the Archbishop would do against them.<sup>87</sup>

There was an undoubted sharpness in Bishop Cheverus' words to the Sacred Congregation in the Charleston case. His patent resentment was directed against what he felt was Rome's lack of knowledge and of consideration in American affairs. His first suggested remedy was the same as Cardinal Litta's: keeping the Sacred Congregation informed about American affairs. He urged the new Archbishop Maréchal to send an agent to Rome.<sup>88</sup> When Father Grassi, the Superior of the Jesuits in the United States, was invited to undertake that business, and, much to Bishop Cheverus' regret, was unable to do so, the Boston prelate urged the Archbishop himself to go to Rome and arrange American affairs. For Charleston was not the only sore spot. A schism was also in existence in Norfolk, Virginia, and it, too, was tied up with the nationalist difficulty between French and Irish. Bishop Cheverus was always insisting that in the American hierarchy there was "no French predilection, and still less a French faction." His notion was that Propaganda

<sup>85</sup> To Cardinal Litta, April 25, 1817 (enclosure in Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, May 1, 1817, *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 H 7).

<sup>86</sup> Cardinal Litta to Bishop Cheverus, June 21, 1817; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 29, 1817.

<sup>87</sup> Pope Pius VII to Archbishop Neale, July 9, 1817. See Shea, *History*, III, 34.

<sup>88</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, April 15, 1817.

"ought to recognize that, being so far away, they can be easily imposed on." However, when he himself wrote to Rome about the situation here, and received a reply that ignored his complaint, his comment was, "let us do our duty and leave the rest to Providence."<sup>89</sup>

## XI

Father Matignon's death, which occurred on September 19, 1818, was the Bishop's and Boston's greatest loss. A turn for the worse in the saintly priest's health had shown itself in June.

On July 15, 1818, Bishop Cheverus wrote to his friend, the Archbishop:

I am threatened with the loss of my excellent friend and holy coöperator, M. Matignon. . . . The doctors say that his lungs are ulcerated. He is very feeble. . . . He preserves all his serenity, does not yet stay in bed, and, on last Saturday, he said Mass. He asks your prayers. . . . I have more need of them than he has. . . . My poor heart is broken. . . .<sup>90</sup>

On July 28, 1818, Father Matignon thought himself well enough to attempt a business letter to Father Le Saulnier in Montreal; but he was unable to finish it.

I would write more if I had the strength. I am no better than when I wrote you last; every day a little weaker than the day before. . . . I commend myself heartily to your prayers. Here is your account with me, which you may desire.

So he wrote out the account: but Bishop Cheverus had to finish the letter.

Our dear invalid is very weak. Pray for him, pray for my church and for me. He directs me to ask you for stipends for two of our priests. . . .<sup>91</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, May 1, 1817. Note that on May 3, 1817, Father Grassi finally accepted the invitation (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 17 G 10); Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Dec. 31, 1817; June 25, July 15, Oct. 28, 1818; cf. also Fish, *Guide to Materials in Roman Archives* (Washington, 1811), pp. 178-181; P. Guilday, *The Church in Virginia, 1815-1822* (New York, 1924).

<sup>90</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, June 25, July 23, 1818.

<sup>91</sup> Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, July 28, 1818. (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

In the midst of Bishop Cheverus' increasing gloom about Father Matignon's approaching death, he received a letter from Mother Seton. She, too, was very ill, and about to die, she thought. She asked the Bishop to keep an eye on her son William, then in the Navy, aboard a ship in Boston Harbor. She felt sure that William would see her no more in this world. The Bishop assured her about William and went on to speak about herself.

You will meet in Heaven the venerable and dearest friend, who is going to be taken from me. . . . He still sits up most of the day, takes some food, but [is] so feeble, so emaciated! He is more than resigned, he rejoices in hope. This blessed hope sparkles in his countenance, his smile has something heavenly in it. The physician says he may continue for weeks . . . Our holy sufferer begs your prayers. He perused your letter and bedewed it with his tears. It had already been with mine. They flow now and I must finish. . . .<sup>92</sup>

On August 20th, Bishop Cheverus wrote to Mr. Williamson, of Maine, the well-known historian:

Boston, August 20th, 1818

Sir

Your favour of August 5th is come to hand & is not neglected, but at present besides my usual duties, I watch an invaluable friend who is dangerously sick. The venerable (& to me the dearest of friends) Dr. Matignon is dying of a consumption. For twenty-two years past we have lived together with more than brotherly affection.

To a man of feeling I need not make any other apology for the delay of my answer. . . .<sup>93</sup>

On August 14th, Father Matignon wrote his last entry in the church account books which he had kept so faithfully and so minutely since January, 1793.<sup>94</sup> On the 21st he made his will.

<sup>92</sup> To Mrs. Seton, Aug. 11, 1818 (*Mt. St. Vincent, N.Y., Archives*).

<sup>93</sup> To Wm. Williamson, Boston, Aug. 20, 1818 (*Boston Pub. Lib.*).

<sup>94</sup> There were no further entries made until Oct. 23, when Bishop Cheverus took up the bookkeeping. He had never touched these books, except during the few weeks in 1802 when Father Matignon went South to collect.



He began it with the sign of the Holy Cross, and appointed Bishop Cheverus as his sole heir.<sup>95</sup>

Before his death, Father Matignon had disposed of his own personal estate of some seventy-five hundred dollars. During life he had used this money to help support his brother and sister in France and to support the priests' house here. For its use after his death he divided it into three equal parts, one to Bishop Cheverus, one to the Ursulines, and the third to provide an annuity for his own brother and sister in France.<sup>96</sup>

One particularly striking part of Father Matignon's will referred to the many trusts which he held for the use of others. Besides the amount of \$15,900 held for the Diocese,<sup>97</sup> there were literally scores of small funds which consisted mostly of savings accounts of the parishioners. The notes attached to some of these small trusts reflect the relations between their owners and the priest. "Should N. N. never return, to apply it to charitable purposes." "What will remain at N. N.'s death is to be employed one half for celebrating Masses for his soul and the other half to be given to the poor." "In case of death, this sum is to be transmitted to N. N.'s daughter, —, Parish of —, County of Waterford, Ireland." "To be sent to his mother —, Parish of —, County of Kilkenny." Truly the Boston pastor had been the banker and the guardian of the poor.

As Father Matignon's weakness increased, there came the day, August 22nd, when, as if to double the gloom, Father Romagné set sail for France, and the Bishop was left alone with the pastor. On August 26th, the Bishop wrote:

Death approaches gradually but inevitably. . . . He regards it with the joy and the smile of hope. He looks on it as a friend and a guide to the arms of God. How I wish I had his faith and resignation! The only thing that seems to affect him is my affliction. (He is very appreciative of Your Highness' interest

<sup>95</sup> *Suffolk Probate Records*, book 25, p. 665.

<sup>96</sup> *Account Book*; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 7, 1819; Bishop Cheverus to his sister-in-law, Mme. Lefebvre de Cheverus, Nov. 14, 1818 (*Private Archives of M. de Plinval*, copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>97</sup> Bishop Cheverus' *Account Book*, p. 22, including Father Thayer's trust.

and recommends himself to your prayers.) . . . He is dying from consumption. He has all his faculties and all of his emotions. Never did his angelic piety appear to me more striking. His smile has in it something of heaven. He is happy; but the poor Bishop of Boston! Pity him and pray for him.<sup>98</sup>

The end came in mid-September. Bishop Cheverus' own notes bring the hours of his passing very close.

On Friday evening, the 18th of September, when I was about to retire, after having embraced him, he said to me, My dear Bishop, tomorrow will be the anniversary of my ordination, it will complete forty years that I have been in holy orders. . . . Alas! how many faults and omissions in my ministry! . . .

And how many good works, my dear friend! I cried — Do not speak of them (replied he) I am an unworthy sinner; but God is so good and merciful that I hope — yes — I hope. — Tears and sobs rendered me incapable of utterance, I held him closely embraced. — He also shed tears. All that I regret (rejoined he) is my separation from you; but we shall be one day re-united. — Pray give me the Blessed Sacrament very early tomorrow morning.

On Saturday the 19th, at half past five o'clock in the morning, I was already in his chamber with the Blessed Sacrament. He was still fasting, and I saw nothing that announced a speedy dissolution. His eyes brightened with hope and fervor. Christ seemed visible to him in the Blessed Sacrament of his love. — He now received in communion the Holy of Holies. — He had already communicated regularly twice a week, from the time that he had been no longer able to celebrate Holy Mass.

At half past six they brought him a cup of coffee; he could hardly swallow two spoonfuls. A sudden weakness and paleness announced that his last hour was approaching. "My good friend (said I) do you not wish to receive Extreme Unction? You seem to me very ill." He appeared somewhat surprised. He looked at me, my tears; he kissed my hand, and drew me towards him to embrace him. "Yes," said he. His speech was thick and embarrassed. I administered this last sacrament with an indulgence *in articulo mortis*. But choked with sobs I

<sup>98</sup> To Bishop Plessis, Aug. 26, 1818 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*); to Father Le Saulnier, Oct. 9, 1818 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice, Montreal*).

begged the ecclesiastic who accompanied me to recite the prayer for persons in their agony. My dying friend held in his hand the cross of his chaplet, embraced a crucifix, pressed my hand in his, and made me a sign with his lips to approach and embrace him once more. He continued silently praying. At half past nine o'clock he began to appear drowsy. At ten o'clock he breathed no more. He died without struggle or agony, and I could not discover precisely the moment that he rendered his last sigh. His death, like his life, was holy and sweet.<sup>99</sup>

When the Bishop made the entry of his funeral in the church-books, he wrote, "he died as he lived, a saint."

His death and his funeral were the occasion of deep public mourning. The body, clothed in the priestly vestments, was exposed in the church during Sunday and Monday. During that time the church was never empty. Protestants, as well as Catholics, came to see the body, wished to touch it, and bathed it with their tears. All blessed and canonized him.

The Bishop preached twice on Sunday and twice on Monday, at the requiem Mass and at the funeral in the afternoon. When tears checked his utterance, every hearer wept with him. In the funeral procession he accompanied the corpse, with the cross raised, and in his pontifical robes. More than a thousand persons, mostly in mourning, as well as some fifteen carriages, joined him to the place of interment, which was John Magner's tomb, in the Old Granary.

All the Boston papers published sympathetic obituaries, one of which was of a uniquely appreciative tone.

This appeared in the *New England Galaxy* on September 25th. Written by the Protestant editor and man of letters, Samuel Knapp, who had long venerated the two Boston Cath-

<sup>99</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, April 21, 1819. The article was headed, "The Last Hours of Dr. Matignon," and had the following introduction: "The following extracts of a letter written by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Cheverus, of this town, are copied from a late Montreal paper, and will be perused with feeling by very many of our readers, who venerate the useful and pious life of the deceased, and respect the learning, urbanity, and elegance, of the living Prelate." These extracts were taken from the notes sent by Father Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, of Montreal, on Oct. 9, 1818 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

olic clergymen and had become their friend, it was a detailed, well-informed, and graciously penned tribute. Too lengthy to be cited here in full (it ran to thirteen pages in a little reprint), it contained passages too remarkable to be entirely omitted. These extracts follow:

The talents of Doctor Matignon were of the highest order. In him were united a sound understanding, a rich and vigorous imagination, and a logical precision of thought. His learning was extensive, critical and profound, and all his productions were deeply cast, symmetrically formed, and beautifully coloured. The fathers of the church and the great divines of every age were his familiar friends. His divinity was not merely speculative, nor merely practical; it was the blended influence of thought, feeling, and action. He had learned divinity as a scholar, taught it as a professor, felt it as a worshipper, and diffused it as a faithful pastor. . . . Rigid and scrupulous to himself, he was charitable and indulgent to others. To youth, in a particular manner, he was forgiving and fatherly. With him the tear of penitence washed away the stains of error; for he had gone up to the fountains of human nature, and knew all its weaknesses. Many, retrieved from folly and vice, can bear witness how deeply he was skilled in the science of parental government.

. . . He dedicated his services not to the mighty, nor to the wise, but to the humblest creatures of sorrow and suffering. Have we not seen our friend leaving [his] sublime contemplations and entering the habitations of want and woe; relieving their temporal necessities, administering the consolations of religion to the despairing soul in the agonies of dissolution?

In manners, Doctor Matignon was an accomplished gentleman, possessing that kindness of heart and delicacy of feeling which made him study the wants and anticipate the wishes of all he knew. He was well acquainted with the politest courtesies of society, for it must not, in accounting for his accomplishments, be forgotten, that he was born and educated in the bosom of refinement. . . .

Doctor Matignon loved his native country, and always expressed the deepest interests in her fortunes and fate; yet his patriotism never infringed on his philanthropy. He spoke of



England as a great nation which contained much to admire and imitate, and his gratitude kindled at the remembrance of British munificence, and generosity to the exiled priests of a hostile nation of different religious creeds. . . .

Far from the sepulchre of his fathers, repose the ashes of the good and great Doctor Matignon; but his grave is not as among strangers for it was watered by the tears of an affectionate flock, and his memory is cherished by all who value learning, honour genius, or love devotion.

The writer of this brief notice offers it as a faint and rude memorial only of the virtues of the man whose character he venerated. Time must assuage the wounds of grief before he, who loved him most, and knew him best, can attempt his epitaph.<sup>100</sup>

Shortly afterwards, a writer in the *Columbian Centinel*, made this noteworthy contribution:

The grave has closed over the life and usefulness of the late Reverend and revered Dr. Matignon. His best Eulogy is the tears of his People, and the voice of general sympathy and regret. . . . But if one who knew him little, but loved him much, might be permitted an additional thought on the subject, he would suggest to the consideration of his fellow townsmen, the propriety of erecting by subscription or otherwise, a more tangible monument to the memory of Dr. Matignon, than the tears and affection of the Public, or the written tributes of the Scholar and the Divine.

The extensive good of which, under Providence, he was the instrument of dispensing to this town — the practical usefulness which characterised his whole life, every individual gratefully acknowledges — for the benefit was as general as it was extensive. Shall no evidence, then, exist of this gratitude? Shall the remembrance of our benefits evaporate with the expression of them? Shall nothing but a rude sculptural stone mark where his body lay?" <sup>101</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Reprint from *New England Galaxy* of Sept. 25, 1818 (Boston, 1818). Bishop Cheverus had been Mr. Knapp's source for the details of the life story of Father Matignon. He wrote to a friend in Montreal that "there were some slight errors in it, but, on the whole, it does honor to [Father Matignon's] talents and his sensibility" (Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, Oct. 9, 1818).

<sup>101</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 10, 1818.

Some three months after Father Matignon's death, the Bishop, who had meanwhile secured property for a cemetery in South Boston, had the revered relics transferred thither. The solemn ceremony took place on Monday, December 21st.<sup>102</sup>

Over the tomb of the venerable priest was set a white marble slab, bearing the epitaph, which the Bishop himself composed:

"Here lie the remains of  
FRANCIS ANTHONY MATIGNON, D.D.,  
and for twenty-six years  
Pastor of the Church of the  
HOLY CROSS  
in this town.  
Ob. September 19  
1818.  
Aet. 65.

"Beloved of God and men, whose memory is in benediction."  
— Eccl. xiv, i.

There followed a quotation from Mal. II, 6-7, and the last paragraph of Knapp's Eulogy.

No public monument to Father Matignon as yet exists. Not even a school has been named in his honor. What is still more remarkable, little or no mention is made of him among Boston Catholics. His fame has been obscured by that of his disciple, the Bishop, and later Cardinal Cheverus. That is unfortunate, for in reality these two great figures of early Catholic Boston should be remembered together; the one as father, the other as disciple; the one as leader, the other as follower.

Such was Bishop Cheverus' own sentiment. When, some years later he was leaving this Diocese, he said to his flock, "It was, as it were, at the school of the regretted and sainted Doctor Matignon that I learned how to love and serve you. Remember him always as the founder of this church."<sup>103</sup>

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 23, 1818; *Suffolk Deeds*, book 261, p. 53; and book 276, p. 80. Father Lariscy did most of the collecting. Cf. also *Boston Dioc. Arch.*, II, 26 ff.

<sup>103</sup> *Monthly Magazine*, I, 1 (June, 1825), 16. On Father Matignon generally, cf. Arthur T. Connolly, *An Appreciation of the Life and Labors of Rev. Francis Matignon, D.D.* (Boston, 1908: Publications of the New England Cath. Hist. Soc., no. 7).

## CHAPTER X

### THE LAST YEARS OF BISHOP CHEVERUS IN BOSTON — I (1819-1823)

THE FOUR YEARS following Father Matignon's death turned out to be years of great progress in the Diocese. Immigration took an upward turn in Boston and New England, and the money held by Father Matignon for the church, and especially for Father Thayer's foundation, became available for use. For these reasons, and because the number of priests had been increased, the diocesan works and missions showed unmistakable signs of a flourishing growth.

During these last four or five years of Bishop Cheverus' stay in the Diocese, five new churches were erected: one each in South Boston (1819), New Bedford (1821), Salem (1821), North Whitefield, Maine (1822), and Claremont, New Hampshire (1823). Plans for a church were made in Vergennes, Vermont, and provisions for a Catholic meeting-place were promised in Hartford, Connecticut. The stations of Newburyport, Massachusetts, Portland, Maine, and Bristol, Newport, and Providence, Rhode Island, were continued. Thus, by the end of the period every State in New England had a Catholic nucleus. To all these places the Bishop himself, seemingly as zealous and active as in his earliest missionary years, made personal visits, and was everywhere an inspiration to the Catholics and a revelation to non-Catholics.

During this same period the long-patient and virtuous character of the Catholics here brought to them a further measure of recognition and freedom in public life through the omission from our Constitution of the obnoxious anti-Catholic oath of abjuration for office-holders. Almost as an offset to all this, the seeds of a further persecution had already been planted and were beginning to send forth their shoots of intolerance. The nonconformist sects increased even more than the Catholics.

Baptists and Methodists, especially, felt the surge of a new strength, which bode ill to old enemies, particularly to the Catholics.

## I

The growth of the Diocese may be illustrated in the following table of baptisms, marriages, and deaths, taken from the *Register* of Holy Cross Church:

YEAR	BAPTISMS	MARRIAGES	DEATHS
1819	149	28	11
1820	207	47	17
1821	182	56	10
1822	282	52	20

These figures are exclusive of the statistics for Maine, and probably they are also quite defective as to the number of burials. Even in their lack of completeness, however, they show a notable increase in the Catholic population since the period of 1815-1818. The baptismal figures for 1820, for example, are made up of 172 infants and 28 adults. This number of infant baptisms indicates the presence of at least 3500 faithful Catholics in the Diocese, outside Maine.<sup>1</sup> As regards the Catholics in Maine, some contemporary accounts gave their numbers as 130 in Newcastle, and 200 in Whitefield; while others rated them as 500 in each place.<sup>2</sup> It may, therefore, be stated with some degree of assurance that in 1820 there was a total of 3850 Catholics in the Diocese. As the contemporaries above quoted also estimated the number of the Maine Indians at 750, the grand total for the Diocese would run to about 4500.

In the early months of 1822, Archbishop Maréchal, in his

<sup>1</sup> The figures given by Father Fitton for 1820, in *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England* (Boston, 1872), p. 118, are due to an error or a misprint. They misled J. G. Shea, *History*, III, 127, n.

<sup>2</sup> J. Greenleaf, *Ecclesiastical History of Maine* (Portsmouth, 1821), p. 236. This information came through the convert, Samuel Bishop, and ultimately from Edward Kavanagh or Bishop Cheverus. Samuel Bishop to Edward Kavanagh, Feb. 9, 1821 (*Portland Dioc. Arch.*); cf. Greenleaf, *op. cit.*, p. iv. Perhaps the 500 is a misprint for 200.



report to Rome, stated that the Catholics in Boston Diocese numbered 3500. The report is, in some regards, untrustworthy. For example, it says nothing of the Indians and refers to only three churches in the Diocese. It is, therefore, apparently based on data for early 1821, and taken as such, it serves to confirm the deduction drawn from the baptisms of 1820.<sup>3</sup> The Archbishop, in his report, accompanied his figures by some notes. Those on Boston ran: "It will surely appear a matter of wonder to the Sacred Congregation that there are so few Catholics in this Diocese." This comment was probably due to the comparatively large numbers contained in the same report for other American dioceses. Baltimore was credited with 80,000 Catholics; Philadelphia with 30,000, and New York with 24,000.

But it is to be observed [the Archbishop continued] that the citizens of this Province [New England] formerly belonged to the very rigid sect called Puritans, and were, therefore, hostile to the Catholic religion; and now they openly profess the Socinian heresy. Although Monseigneur Cheverus has not brought many of these [last-named] heterodox people into the Catholic faith, he has made much progress. By his extraordinary mildness of manner, his eloquence, his great charity and holiness of life, he has destroyed almost all the prejudices of those Puritans. So much so that not only do they esteem and revere this excellent prelate, but also regard him as a very great credit and ornament to their city. He, therefore, is opening the door for future conversions which either he or his successor will bring about.<sup>4</sup>

In this same report the Archbishop did not mention what was the great cause of increase in the other dioceses, Irish immigration. This had not yet touched Boston in the same measure as it had the places farther south, like New York and Phila-

<sup>3</sup> It is of some value to compare with the total Catholic population the number of those who received Holy Communion. In 1819, the Paschal communions numbered 800, the Christmas communions, 600. In 1820, the Paschal communions amounted to 700 (Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819; to Father Bruté, Jan. 5, April 14, and Dec. 19, 1820).

<sup>4</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fide, Am. Cent.*, VII, 601 (photostat in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

delphia. That it was beginning, however, to show its effects in Boston also is plainly indicated by the fact that almost all the infants baptized there in these years bore Irish names. In this connection it is interesting to note, by contrast, that the adults baptized, for example, in 1820 were almost exclusively non-Irish. They bore the names Foster, Blakely, Davis, Peterson, Tower, Gullner, Marshall, Shattuck, Goodwin, Vinton, Trask, etc.

The Boston church, therefore, was growing, not as much as it would in later years, but still with notable increase; and in large measure as a result of immigration from Ireland. A striking proof of that growth, at the very beginning of the period, appears in the Bishop's plan to enlarge the church. Of this more details will be given later in this chapter.

Representative Catholics in New York and in the South found the progress of the church in New England amazing. They recalled that misconception about Catholicity and opposition to it had been greater in this section of the country than in any other, and that false impressions of Catholic belief and practice were still prevalent here. Nevertheless, they wrote:

The congregation of Boston is respectable for numbers, good conduct, peaceable demeanor and piety: it consists principally of persons who are filled with the spirit of their religion, and who reduce its principles to practice. . . . The Roman Catholics of Boston, in a religious point of view, may compete with any other division in America. . . . They (and the Catholics of Maine) are not men who call themselves so and sometimes appear at church, but persons who are punctual in the discharge of their duties. Our impression is that the number of communicants . . . is thrice as great in proportion to the aggregate as in most other places in the Union.<sup>5</sup>

During these years the Bishop, who after Father Matignon's death had three priests, saw their number increase to five through the ordination of the two seminarians residing with him. One of these was ordained in 1819, the other in 1820.

<sup>5</sup> *United States Catholic Miscellany* (Charleston, July 10, 1822).

Thenceforward the number of priests remained at five, for although two of them left the Diocese, two others were added.<sup>6</sup>

This number of priests seemed to the Bishop sufficient, partly because it then met the needs of the growing Diocese, and partly because it almost exhausted the Diocese's means for support of the clergy. The means which he used for their support, when their Masses and small offertory did not suffice, were the ordinary revenues of the Cathedral.<sup>7</sup> The Bishop also supplemented these in a special manner out of his own property. He had \$5000; \$2500 from his brother and \$2610 which he had received from Father Matignon's legacy. These funds brought in an annual interest of \$305.50. In regard to them, he wrote in his *Account Book*:

I shall endeavour to preserve these untouched, and apply the above \$305.50 per annum to my clothing and other personal expenses. All the rest shall go for the expenses of the house and the support of the clergymen with me. Whatever I receive as retribution for Masses and offerings for any ecclesiastical functions shall be employed in charities, and also whatever might remain as a balance in my favor at the end of each year [from the church].

There were, however, times when, in order to meet extraordinary clerical expenses, the Bishop had to borrow from "The Charity Fund." This fund, made up from gifts, some of which he gave himself, such as "\$68 from the Christmas collection" of 1818, was chiefly used for alms and for schooling poor children.<sup>8</sup> An extraordinary item included in the accounts for 1819 reads: "one hundred and fifty dollars for the expenses of the two young clergymen going to Maine, one as a missionary." These would be Father Cailleaux and Rev. Mr. Patrick Byrne. The charitable prelate had already spent one hundred and fifty dollars on them, and evidently had to borrow this extra hundred and fifty dollars from the Charity Fund. He

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, April 14, 1820 (*Notre Dame Arch.*); to Archbishop Maréchal, Nov. 26, 1822. *The Laity's Directory for 1822* contained no list.

<sup>7</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 1, 1820.      <sup>8</sup> *Account Book*, pp. 120 f.

added a note, addressed to his executor, about returning this sum to the fund.

Meanwhile, he had also taken care to provide for the future recruiting of the clergy. He had long ago given up hope of Edward Kavanagh's becoming a priest. That young man at some period of his sojourn abroad had made studies in Ireland. In March, 1816, when he had not yet returned from Europe, Bishop Cheverus wrote to a friend that there was "everything to fear and hardly any room to hope" that he would persevere in his vocation.<sup>9</sup> In April, 1816, Kavanagh was in Paris.<sup>10</sup> After his return to this country (*ca.* 1817), he turned to the study of law (with Mr. Alfred Smith, of Portland).<sup>11</sup> In the early months of 1821 he applied to St. Mary's, Baltimore, for the degree of M.A., which was accorded to him in the following year on the basis of his private studies and those made in Ireland.<sup>12</sup> Afterwards he followed the law and the lawmaking career. Thus, the last of Father Matignon's early hopes for vocations went unfulfilled. However, even before Edward Kavanagh's return to America, his younger brothers (Samuel and James?) had entered Montreal College. This occurred about 1816, i.e., just after the war.<sup>13</sup> And with them began again a little stream of boys from the Diocese who were sent away to study. By May, 1817, Henry Bonneuil, the Viscount's younger brother, was already a student in his first year at Montreal.<sup>14</sup> In May, 1819, another Boston boy, named Daniel Tracy, was also studying there.<sup>15</sup>

At a slightly later date (1821?-1822?), the Bishop had likewise started on their higher studies young (William?) Cazneau, James Fitton, Samuel Walley, and perhaps James Smithwick,

<sup>9</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 23, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>10</sup> To Bonneuil, July 1, 1816.

<sup>11</sup> See Father Aeneas MacDonald, Dec. 20, 1853 (*Private Arch.*).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Father Tessier to Bishop Cheverus, Feb. 16, 1821 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*) and Father Taylor to Edward Kavanagh, Sept. 21, 1822 (*Portland Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>13</sup> Father Aeneas MacDonald, Dec. 20, 1853.

<sup>14</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, May 3, Aug. 11, 1817; April 11, 1818; and Jan. 10, 1819 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice, Montreal*).

<sup>15</sup> He went back to Ireland with his mother (Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, May 13, 1819).



all members of well-known Catholic families, here and in New-castle, Maine.<sup>16</sup> Some of these boys were sent to college in the hope of their becoming priests. The Cathedral Seminary was evidently no more; partly because, with an extra priest in the Bishop's house, it had not sufficient room, and partly because of the larger number of students and their increased means.

## II

During almost the whole of the year 1819, the Bishop busied himself with three building projects. They were the first expensive works undertaken since the church and rectory were finished in 1803, and were financed by the funds (including the Thayer fund) so carefully husbanded by Father Matignon. Although the idea of building terrified the Bishop, just as the financial care of the Diocese worried him, he set about these now necessary tasks with devoted eagerness.<sup>17</sup>

The first of the building projects was the erection of a chapel in the newly purchased South Boston cemetery. The Bishop's plan called for the placing of the chapel in the middle of the cemetery a few yards from the tomb of "the dear Dr. Matignon, which would then be opposite the door."<sup>18</sup> The new building was to be "35 feet long, 20 wide and 18 high, a small Gothic edifice."<sup>19</sup> By May 13th, it had been begun and the dedication service took place on July 4th, that same year. The chapel was named St. Augustine's, in honor of Father Lariscy, who was an Augustinian.<sup>20</sup>

According to the church records the first interment in the new cemetery, after Father Matignon's, was that of a fifteen-day-old baby named Susan Alamons (December 23, 1818); and the next, that of Joseph Kelly (December 31, 1818). After them, during the year 1819, came Edward Fitzgerald, Mary

<sup>16</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, April 11, Sept. 2, 1822.

<sup>17</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, Jan. 10, 1819.

<sup>18</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819.

<sup>19</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, May 13, 1819.

<sup>20</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, 1819; *Columbian Centinel*, July 3rd; *Boston Gazette*, July 5th.

Cermenat , James Grace, James Brown, Alice Moran, John Isaac, Catherine Whitney, Margaret Whitney, and Henry Noust. These names clearly reflect the mixed racial character of the congregation itself. In 1820, on January 31st, Don Juan Stoughton, who died on the 28th at seventy-five years of age, found his last resting-place here. During the next month he was followed by another old-timer, Esther Reilly, aged about eighty. In July, 1820, there was buried here Mrs. Charles Seton, aged thirty-seven, who was the sister-in-law of Mother Elizabeth Seton, and who had also become a convert. She was preceded in death and burial here in May by her nephew, John Knowland Tower, aged twenty, who had followed her into the church. These were the first to find their earthly rest alongside the tomb of their saintly pastor: the first of the hundreds to be buried in this first "consecrated ground" in Boston.

The chapel itself provided a place of worship for those Catholics who had been drawn to South Boston, partly through the land development of that section, and partly through the presence of the glass-works, where they were employed. Services were held in it every Sunday from the time of its dedication, and they were evidently well attended.<sup>21</sup>

The Bishop's second building project was repairing the Church of the Holy Cross. In this regard his intention was to have the church re-roofed and completely repaired and to change the vestibule in such a way as to put pews there. This latter change seemed required by the increased church attendance. "We are much restricted now," the Bishop wrote to Archbishop Mar chal on May 6, 1819. In the next letter he reported on the work, and finally stated that just before Christmas the work was finished.<sup>22</sup> In 1819, the impressiveness of the newly decorated edifice was enhanced by the special attention which devout ladies had given to the altar.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Account Book*, p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> To Archbishop Mar chal, May 6, July 16, 1819 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); to Father Brut , Jan. 5, 1820 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>23</sup> Some time in early 1823, a new organ was installed in the Cathedral. Eight hundred dollars was paid to Mr. Goodrich for it, whether as whole or part payment is not ascertainable. A certain Mrs. Ostinelli was organist at the time; she was succeeded by Mrs. Brown.

The Bishop's third project was to prepare to house the Ursulines. About the beginning of the year 1819, he bought for this purpose a plot of land adjoining the Cathedral property on the east. It measured some sixty feet by thirty, and cost forty-five hundred dollars. Its proximity to the church and its rounding out that property made for a greater facility in the work and future increase in value, although it involved the disadvantage of nearness to the noise and business of the growing town. It touched the other lot, of about the same size, which had previously been bought for a school. This other lot might have been continued as a garden and have served as a recreation space for the nuns; but in the Bishop's mind it was most prudently employed for its original purpose. The double lot, therefore, containing about thirty-five hundred square feet, was used for the school project. By May the convent was started, and later the school building also.<sup>24</sup>

The Bishop had looked forward to their completion by the fall, and had in mind to go to Canada at that time and escort the nuns back here.<sup>25</sup> The work, however, took longer than he had anticipated, so that the buildings were only ready by Christmas, which was too late in the season for the Bishop's intended Canadian expedition and the nuns' coming. Nevertheless, that Christmas brought to the Boston prelate the consolation of seeing all his new projects finished; of hearing no more workmen around the place, and of knowing that all the expenses had been paid, with sufficient surplus to take care of the Ursulines for the next few years. He hoped that, in a short time after their arrival, they would become self-supporting.<sup>26</sup> At this time, finally, he dared give expression to what had long been in his mind. He would have preferred Mother Seton's Sisters and especially that holy foundress herself for the Boston

<sup>24</sup> *Suffolk Deeds*, book 261, p. 219; also p. 291, Feb. 9, 1819; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819; *Columbian Centinel*, May 29, 1819; Bishop Fenwick, *Memoranda*, p. 283; Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, Jan. 10, May 13, 1819.

<sup>25</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, May 13, July 12, 1819; to Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, 1819.

<sup>26</sup> To Father Bruté, Jan. 5, April 4, 1820; to Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, 1820.

convent, but the will of Father Thayer had been positive in favor of the Ursulines.<sup>27</sup>

In June, 1820, Bishop Cheverus went to Montreal, where he met the four Ursulines, two professed and two novices, and accompanied them to Boston. By the 18th of July they were installed in their new house here (under the patronage of St. Joseph)<sup>28</sup> and the Bishop, who had unsuccessfully sought a director for them from the Diocese of Baltimore, had been obliged to become their director himself.<sup>29</sup> As soon as they arrived, they had begun to teach catechism, and by early September had already done much to renew the spirit of piety among the young girls, and had also received a postulant as a lay sister. They planned not to take boarders until the next year, but would keep a day-school for poor girls:<sup>30</sup> and indeed in September, they opened their school with more than one hundred young girls as pupils, divided between morning and afternoon sessions. That was all they could handle.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Boston had its first really parochial school. Father Thayer's wish and will had finally been fulfilled, despite the fact that, as was recalled by a contemporary, the plan had at first been "ridiculed by some and laughed at by others; and even those most friendly to the undertaking thought it a desperate one."<sup>32</sup> The writer of that statement also said that the whole plan, not yet carried into effect, embraced, "in addition to this common course of instruction, a high female school for Protestant as well as Catholic children, in which the most elevated and extensive branches of education might be taught."<sup>33</sup>

The double purpose in the Thayer foundation, here mentioned explicitly for the first time, but evidently understood by Father Thayer, Father Matignon, and Bishop Cheverus from

<sup>27</sup> To Father Bruté, Jan. 5, 1820.

<sup>28</sup> St. Joseph's Day was their feast-day (Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Plessis, March 19, 1822). It was also Archbishop Plessis' feast-day.

<sup>29</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, July 18, 1820.

<sup>30</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 1, 1820.

<sup>31</sup> To Father Bruté, Dec. 19, 1820; and to Archbishop Plessis, Jan. 2, 1821.

<sup>32</sup> Samuel L. Knapp, "The Black Nuns," in *Boston Monthly Magazine*, I (Sept., 1825), p. 184.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*



the beginning, is, unfortunately, seldom adverted to. Recognition of its existence gives quite a different view of the venture from that which is often presented. The education of poor Catholic children was the institution's first work. The idea of an academy, catering also to non-Catholics, was only its secondary development. Thus, the Ursulines continued the work which the Church had subsidized for many years previously. The Charity Fund items, "paid to Thomas Haney" and "paid to Mrs. Lawler [Lander?] for schooling poor children," the former of which went back many years, ended in March, 1820.

No evidence is at hand to show that the Boston public manifested any opposition to the founding of a Catholic nunnery in its midst. Of curiosity, undoubtedly, there was not a little; and this had opportunity for outlet, shortly after the Nuns' School was opened. On St. Ursula's day, October 21st, the two novices whom the Bishop had brought from Canada made their vows, and the Bishop put all the solemnity possible into the ceremony, having four priests assisting him. The church was jammed, with an audience which included many Protestants; all were moved to tears. The Bishop preached, taking for text the words, "As if dying, and behold we live," from St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 6, verses 9-10. The theme was: a religious as the world sees her: a religious as she really is.<sup>34</sup> On February 15, 1821, one of the two lay sisters who had joined the community took the habit. On that occasion the Bishop wrote: "That is enough lay sisters for the present. I would like to have two or three more [postulants] destined to become full sisters."<sup>35</sup>

The Boston foundation made a favorable impression on Archbishop Maréchal who, at a certain moment, thought of establishing a similar one in Baltimore, and asked the Bishop of Boston to send one of his sisters to begin it. The Boston prelate, considering the latter request impossible to grant, replied that if the Archbishop "had someone whom he thought

<sup>34</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Dec. 19, 1820 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>35</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, Jan. 2, 1821; to Father Le Saulnier, Feb. 20, 1821.

capable of founding a new establishment, he could send her to Boston or to Canada to make her noviceship."<sup>36</sup>

The next news from the convent was of a different kind. On January 27, 1823, the Bishop wrote to a friend: "Pray for the soul of one of my dear Ursulines, Marie Magdeleine. She died the death of the just at two o'clock this morning."<sup>37</sup> Three months later, the Bishop again wrote: "One of my dear Ursulines is dying. She dies like a saint."<sup>38</sup> Her death notice in the newspaper read: "On Wednesday [the 9th] [died] Miss Catherine Ryan, aged twenty-eight, a native of Limerick, Ireland, and an assistant in the Ursuline Convent of the Catholic Church in this city."<sup>39</sup>

Not many months afterwards the Superior herself was obliged by illness to keep to her room. By February, 1824, the attending physician entertained but slight expectation of her recovering. She had all the symptoms of consumption. She herself asked the Vicar-General to invite another nun from Quebec or New Orleans to take her place, saying no other member of the Boston community could do so.<sup>40</sup> In fact, at that time one of the two other professed nuns was also in a precarious state of health. This sister died about March 1, 1824, and the Superior herself passed away before June 9th. The result was that the Bishop of Quebec, to whom Father Taylor wrote, sent to Boston Sister Mary Edmond St. George (Anne Ursula Moffet), to conduct the establishment here.<sup>41</sup>

The deaths of three nuns, occurring one so rapidly after the other, and the serious illness of another, were calculated to excite alarm in the Canadian communities and rendered some caution necessary to preserve the health of the other Boston nuns. Therefore, the physician who attended the convent, and who was "a gentleman of celebrity in his profession," looked

<sup>36</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, March 26, 1821 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*), and to Father McElroy, at Georgetown, Oct. 23, and Nov. 3, 1821 (*Fordham Arch.*).

<sup>37</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 27, 1823.

<sup>38</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, April 8, 1823.

<sup>39</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, April 12, 1823.

<sup>40</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, Feb. 12, 1824.

<sup>41</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Plessis, March 1, 1824; Archbishop Plessis to Father Taylor, March 17, 1824.

into the matter carefully. He gave his decision that the contracted scale on which the convent was erected could not, even remotely, be connected with causing the deaths. He pronounced their complaint as hereditary consumption.<sup>42</sup>

Under the new Superior, the convent prospered. Sister St. George was an altogether remarkable person. She was pictured by Samuel L. Knapp as "a lady of rare accomplishments, whose elegance of person, amenity of manners and dignity of deportment charm every mother that enters the convent."<sup>43</sup> \*Knapp also stated that the nuns "have succeeded . . . to spread a degree of intelligence amongst their pupils highly creditable to the establishment." When Father Taylor left the Diocese, there were some fifty to sixty children in the school.<sup>44</sup>

### III

During these years the Bishop continued his pastoral work of visiting the sick and the poor. One of the outstanding examples of his zeal, happening about this time, has been graphically described by the person concerned. A certain Frenchman, M. Milbert by name, who was traveling in America came to Boston in the course of his journey. He had first heard Bishop Cheverus preach in New York in December, 1815, and had been so impressed with "his sweet and persuasive voice" that he immediately desired to know him personally. Of his arrival in Boston and his introduction to the Bishop, he wrote:

He received me with great cordiality, and when showing me the only room he occupied in the house, he said, "You see the episcopal palace: it is open to everyone."

Such is the power of virtue [the French gentleman declared in his memoir] that the name of the French Bishop is pronounced only with veneration by every one. In fact, who could remain unmoved when seeing this veritable apostle set out alone, and on foot, in all kinds of weather, and at any hour of

<sup>42</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Plessis, June 9, 1824 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>43</sup> *Boston Monthly Magazine*, I (Sept., 1825), 184.

<sup>44</sup> Bishop Fenwick, *Memoranda*, p. 283, typed copy.

day or night, on a visit of many miles to console the afflicted, to bring aid in secret to the indigent and words of peace and concord to disunited families! I myself experienced the extent of his devotion, when I was struck down by the pernicious fever which often ravages that country. At the first news of my misfortune, the Apostle of Boston, unaffected by any fear of contagion, hurried to me. . . . His heart took complete possession of mine; his persuasive eloquence succeeded in calming my spirit which was no less ill than my body. In fine, his repeated visits, joined with the . . . care of Mr. and Miss de Valnais, brought me back to life.<sup>45</sup>

The poor were likewise the constant object of the Bishop's solicitude. The winter of 1819-1820, after a moderate beginning turned cold, and the Bishop, who had just paid for his new buildings, had to use the rest of his money solely for the poor, "of whom," he wrote at the time, "there are many."<sup>46</sup> The sick and the delinquent also continued to be his solicitude. An instance of his care for the latter was narrated years afterwards by a Boston non-Catholic:

As I was passing through an obscure street in Boston many years ago, at a late hour in the evening, I encountered a decently-dressed female, who was weeping bitterly. Upon inquiring into the cause of her distress, she told me that she had been turned out of doors by a brutal husband, and knew not where to go to spend the night. From her brogue, I knew that she was Irish; and I endeavored to persuade her to go to her priest, and seek refuge or advice from him. At first she refused to go; nor was it until I offered to attend her myself that she, with much reluctance, consented to follow me to his house. Late as the hour was, not knowing what else to do with my charge, I knocked at his door. He soon came to me, and I told him my story. The woman had slunk into a corner. He spoke to her; but she would not answer nor come forward. At length he procured a lantern, and came to her. As soon as he saw her features, he said, "Ah, woman! you have brought this upon yourself; but come in, while I go and see your husband,

<sup>45</sup> Milbert, *Itinéraire pittoresque du fleuve Hudson* (Paris, 1828), pp. xiv-xvi.

<sup>46</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Jan. 5, 1820; to Bonneuil, Dec. 27, 1819.



and try to get you out of this trouble." He then took her by the hand, and led her into the house; and, at near midnight, set off to find the enraged husband, and try to reconcile him to his offending wife who, he told me, had, by her own faults, alienated him from her to a degree which had, for the first time, shown itself in the present outrage.<sup>47</sup>

Thus, already some years before the beginning of that kind of social work which was started in 1826 by the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman and was known as the Ministry-at-large, Bishop Cheverus and the two priests associated with him in the city were performing it, as indeed he and Father Matignon had done for years. In this connection a most enlightening testimony was given a few years afterward by a certain William Ware, a disciple of Mr. Tuckerman. It ran:

It was a common remark that [Bishop Cheverus] did more for the peace and order of the city, through the moral means which he employed, than was effected by all the various machinery of the law. The remark . . . was founded in truth, and it shows the estimation in which the public held his services. He was, in fact, a minister-at-large in the truest acceptance of the term. He lived almost among the poor; and, though he might often be compelled to witness want and suffering, which he had no means to relieve, yet he was always ready with what he could give, his sympathy and the consolations of the faith he preached. His memory, where he lived and labored, will never die. The name of Cheverus will never be forgotten by the poor of Boston.<sup>48</sup>

In the Catholic parish at Boston, presided over by the two zealous and saintly priests, all the city had opportunity to see:

1. The general superiority in character and condition of the people affiliated with the church over those who should have been, but were not.

2. The unique contact between leaders and people brought

<sup>47</sup> *A Memorial of John W. Foster*, Andrew P. Peabody, ed. (Portsmouth, 1852), pp. 207 ff.

<sup>48</sup> In *New York American*, country edition, May 15, 1832; cited in McColgan, *Joseph Tuckerman* (Washington, D.C., 1940), p. 181.

about through the attendance at church on Sunday and the making of confession at regular intervals.

3. The immense influence exercised by the sick-calls, the personal visits made in the dwellings of the poor.

4. The inevitable development of supplementing these last through an organized religious charitable society.

During the whole period of the busy years 1819 and 1820, when the Bishop was occupied with his several new buildings and his pastoral care, he had the solid support of Father Lariscy. He found this priest "an excellent man, zealous, pious, etc.," and, just after Dr. Matignon's death, when the Bishop regarded his own physical condition as critical, he made him administrator of the Diocese. This he did at first as a temporary arrangement. Not many months passed, however, when he decided to let Father Lariscy's appointment stand.<sup>49</sup>

This additional mark of confidence in his first assistant may have been engendered in the Bishop's mind by a remarkable incident which occurred in the meantime, and which brought Father Lariscy into very favorable light before the public. It had to do with the service he rendered to four men who had been convicted of piracy and murder and sentenced to hanging. Two of them were Catholics: the two others, who were Lutherans, also asked for the priest and became Catholics before they died. After their execution, on February 18, 1819, the *Boston Gazette* reported the fact, bestowing great praise on the priest, "whose attentions have been unremitting, and who for the last forty-eight hours of their lives scarcely left them for a moment." It spoke of the priest's care of them as indefatigable and efficacious; it called him "the good confessor" and was on the whole most uncommonly eulogistic.<sup>50</sup> A similar incident in 1820 brought a similar exercise of the priest's care, a similar success, and a similar praise in the public press.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 7, and May 6, 1819.

<sup>50</sup> *Boston Gazette*, Feb. 22, 1819.

<sup>51</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, April 4, 1820; cf. Rev. J. G. Shea, *op. cit.*, III, 118-119.

## IV

The zealous Father Lariscy, besides working in the city, busied himself also in various outside missions. Although the tradition that he traveled all over New England seems far-fetched, good evidence indicates that he did care, at least on several occasions, for the southern missions. In one of these he left the special mark of his zeal: he was the founder of the first church in New Bedford. It has been said that Bishop Cheverus visited that small town around the year 1811 and a few times thereafter, but its Catholic history really began with Father Lariscy in 1820. Among the Irish living there were Patrick Galahan, Peter Connor, John Ryan, and John Brian, but especially Patrick Clancy, who appears as the popular godfather at New Bedford baptisms. Under the priest's inspiration arrangements were made to purchase a forty-rod section on the easterly part of Edward Wing's land facing on "the highway." Eighty dollars was the price fixed upon and the deed was passed to the Bishop on March 19, 1821.<sup>52</sup> On this lot the people erected a small frame building to serve them as a church. It was finished in less than four months at a cost, it has been estimated, of eight hundred dollars. Hardly anything is known about it, except that Father Fitton later described it as "located among rocks and enclosed with a high board fence, and, as it appeared to us, the least desirable spot in the town."<sup>53</sup>

Arrangements were made to have the church dedicated on Sunday, July 29th, but at the last moment the ceremony was deferred.<sup>54</sup> It is difficult not to connect the change with Father Lariscy's sudden dismissal from the Diocese, which took place during the week preceding the published dedication date. At that time it happened that the Bishop was just returned from a much-needed vacation. He had taken advantage of the

<sup>52</sup> *Bristol County Deeds*, book 110, p. 61.

<sup>53</sup> Duane H. Hurd, *History of Bristol County* (Philadelphia, 1883), p. 92; Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 160. Archbishop Dowling, "The Diocese of Providence," in *History of the Catholic Church in New England*, I, 451, where there is also a description of the church as seen by Bishop Fenwick in 1841.

<sup>54</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, July 28, 1821.

arrival in Boston of another priest, the Rev. William Taylor from New York, to go on the trip which took him first to Baltimore and then to Montreal. During his absence he received several letters from Father Lariscy, whom he left in charge,<sup>55</sup> and undoubtedly from Father Taylor also. From their letters the Bishop must have surmised that relations between the two priests were strained. Nor was this to be wondered at, for not only were they men of very different training and temperament, but they also had a special temptation to be at odds. Father Taylor had come to Boston from New York where he had been leader of a party opposed to one of Father Lariscy's friends.

Whatever the details, the upshot was inevitable. The Bishop at his return felt himself compelled to choose between the two priests. He let Father Lariscy go. The Bishop was willing to give the priest an *exeat* and to help him get a place in some other diocese: he even gave him a present of one hundred dollars and had the people take up a collection for him, which amounted to between two and three hundred dollars more: but he refused to employ him any longer in the Diocese of Boston. The Bishop explained to other people that he found him too rough and uncontrolled in temper.<sup>56</sup>

Even after Father Lariscy's departure, the New Bedford mission was evidently maintained, for Father Taylor visited there on April 6, 1823. On this occasion he preached both afternoon and evening in "Witaker's Church."<sup>57</sup> He probably visited New Bedford at other times also. It is known, for example, that besides his trip to New Bedford in 1823, he visited Claremont in June, 1822, and was at Hartford in the autumn of that year.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Father Lariscy to Bishop Cheverus, June 24, 1821 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*, A 57).

<sup>56</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Aug. 17 and Sept. 26, 1821, and to Archbishop Plessis, Sept. 6, 1821. After leaving Boston, Father Lariscy worked in the Diocese of New York, and also in Philadelphia, where he died April 6, 1824. Cf. *Amer. Cath. Hist. Researches*, III (1887), 12-18.

<sup>57</sup> Z. W. Pease, *Life in New Bedford a Hundred Years Ago* (New Bedford, 1922), p. 26.

<sup>58</sup> See below, note 120.



## V

The Catholics of Salem, whom Father McQuade attended the first Sunday of each month, lost a good friend in the year 1819. On December 29th of that year died the kindly and tolerant Unitarian minister, Dr. Bentley, who had helped Salem Catholics and their priests since Father Thayer's time. The least of his many benefits to them was the preservation of much of their early history. His *Diary* is practically its only source. By it, however, he has also gained for himself a unique place in that history. His praise is on the lips of all Catholics who know it.<sup>59</sup>

The Catholics, under Father McQuade's guidance, were continuously collecting for their church, and on September 8, 1820, Bishop Cheverus bought land for it, near the North River, at the corner of Mill and Bridge Streets. The sellers were the Marblehead Bank of Marblehead, and the price paid was two hundred dollars.<sup>60</sup> The work of building the church was taken in hand at once, and

continued slowly, all the men helping a little after their day's labor was done, and gladly giving their time to build a house for God. The main part of the building, without the tower and wings, was ready in the summer of the year 1821, and is noted in the *Salem Gazette* of July 27, "as a neat building, of convenient size and pleasantly located, which, it is expected, will be soon dedicated." There was no plaster finish for the interior and no paint on the outside. This tells us better than any description that money was not the chief possession of the Catholics, and that their wealthy fellow-citizens were not eager to give, out of their great abundance. The little congregation was happy, however, to possess, at length, its own church; and we may easily realize their feelings of joy at the first visit of Bishop Cheverus, on Sunday, October 14, 1821, when the "Holy Sacrifice" was offered for the first time in St. Mary's Church. Everything was arranged in the church by

<sup>59</sup> Rev. L. S. Walsh, *Origin of the Catholic Church in Salem*, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>60</sup> Copy of deed in *ibid.*, p. 24.

Mr. Gilman, who spoke of it to his altar-boys of later times as one of the proud and happy days of his life.

The church had a seating capacity for about three hundred and fifty persons.

After the dedication the Bishop officiated there several times, usually taking the opportunity to visit Newburyport as well. For example, he was in Newburyport on April 23 and July 17, 1822, and in Salem on November 29, 1822, and January 12, 1823. On that lastnamed visit he was suffering from such a heavy cold that he could hardly get through the services.<sup>61</sup>

In the late spring of 1823, Salem Catholics lost the services of their pastor, Father McQuade, who went to Ireland. After that they were cared for by priests from the Cathedral, probably on the first Sunday of the month, as in former days.<sup>62</sup>

## VI

There is little to depend on for the story of the Rhode Island mission in the years 1819 to 1823. From the evidence available, however, the district was apparently visited by the Bishop at least once a year. For example, he surely paid visits to Bristol in 1820 and 1821.<sup>63</sup> It is also certain that in June, 1823, he visited Providence and for the first time Pawtucket also.

The oldest record of Catholicity in Pawtucket is found in the *Baptismal Register* of Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston. On June 6, 1823, Bishop Cheverus baptized in Pawtucket Jane Morrison, Mary Wall, Edward McCartney, Mary Ann Asley, and John Gillespie. On the same day he baptized in Providence.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> To T. Carlyle, of Salem, Jan. 14, 1823 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

<sup>62</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, July 19, 1823.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Nov. 29, 1820, and Oct. 23, 1821.

<sup>64</sup> Archbishop Dowling, *op. cit.*, p. 410. The *Boston Baptismal Register* shows that the Bishop had opportunity to visit Rhode Island in 1822, after Sept. 24th and before Oct. 6th; or in the first three weeks of November.

## VII

The outstanding fact in the Maine mission in these years was the dedication of a new church built by Father Dennis Ryan at Whitefield. The original record of this event still exists in the *Baptismal Register*, now in the *Portland Diocesan Archives*.

Sunday, June the 30th, 1822, in the Town of Whitefield, County of Lincoln, State of Maine, the new Church erected in the same place was blessed and dedicated under the name of St. Dennis by me, the undersigned Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston, assisted by Father Ryan, pastor of said Church and of the Church of St. Patrick at Damariscotta. I preached from the 7th chapter of the 1st Book of Paralipomenon (or Chronicles) verses 15 and 16. "My eyes shall be open and my ears attentive to the prayer of him that shall pray in this place. For I have chosen and have sanctified this place that my name may be there for ever and my eyes and my heart may remain there perpetually."<sup>65</sup>

## VIII

Just before Father Romagné's departure for Europe, the Governor of Massachusetts had come to a final settlement with the Penobscot Indians. On June 29, 1818, the latter gave to the State a quitclaim to all the lands remaining to them in the District of Maine, except four townships and the islands in the river. In return, the Government promised, among other things, to give them certain supplies annually, to employ an instructor in husbandry for them, and to repair their church at Old Town. In the following year the Government also appropriated three hundred and fifty dollars as an annual stipend to their religious teachers.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, Bishop Cheverus was relieved of the financial anxiety connected with Father Romagné's departure. He had already

<sup>65</sup> *Newcastle Baptismal Register*, etc., under *Dedications*. See also *Portland Press & Argus*, July 17, 1908.

<sup>66</sup> *Mass. Acts and Resolves*, Jan. 22, 1819. The treaty was ratified Feb. 20, 1819. See Williamson, *Maine*, II, 670 ff.

been preparing a successor to that grand missionary in the person of the Rev. Stephen Cailleaux, whom he ordained a priest on June 5, 1819, the Saturday before Trinity Sunday. In preparation for Father Cailleaux's work, the Bishop asked Father Le Saulnier to get him, if it could be easily done, "something printed in the Indian language, some Masses with musical notation, etc." <sup>67</sup> Shortly thereafter he sent the new priest to his new mission, beginning with the Passamaquoddy Indians, and he sent with him, as companion, his former fellow seminarian, Patrick Byrne, who was then only in minor orders. <sup>68</sup>

Practically nothing is known of Father Cailleaux's work among the Indians, except that it was of fairly short duration. He is known to have been in Boston in March, 1821, and certainly by the spring of 1822 was no longer among the Indians. His departure created a serious embarrassment for both the Indians and the Bishop. The only priest whom the latter had available, as even a temporary replacement, was the young Father Byrne, who had now been ordained, and had been working on the Vermont mission. Therefore, on June 11, 1822, Father Byrne left Boston with the two Passamaquoddy Indians who had come to Boston to fetch him and accompany him back to their tribe: but he stayed with the tribe only a month, because he had to help out in Boston also during the Bishop's absence on other missions.

The departure of the regular missionary and the merely temporary character of Father Byrne's work among the Indians gave Protestants an opportunity of disputing with the Catholics their control of the Indians. On February 3, 1823, the *New Hampshire Repository* carried a reprint from the *Christian Mirror*, of Portland, which indicated the beginning of such a move.

There are stated, on the authority of Morse, to be . . . Passamaquoddies 150 . . . Penobscots, 277. . . . The influence of their Catholic priests has been universally admitted to be one of the greatest obstacles in the way of their improvement. Since, however, their former priest returned to France, this influence has

<sup>67</sup> July 12, 1819.

<sup>68</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, 1819.



been rapidly diminishing. . . . Within two years, they have received but a single visit of a few weeks from a Catholic missionary.

The article then urged an effort to Protestantize these "heathen." The results were soon evident. A society was organized to support the work, and in June, 1823, a Protestant school was opened at Old Town. The matter was much advertised and an appeal was made for state aid.<sup>69</sup> As will appear later, this school of such great promise lasted only a few weeks and had to be closed "because of the illness of the teacher."

## IX

During these years the Catholics of upper Vermont were being cared for occasionally by Father Mignault, of Chambly. On October 5, 1819, he wrote to the auxiliary Bishop in Montreal that he had visited the New York side of Lake Champlain and

at present I still must visit the south side as far as Vergennes. . . . The people of that district are very eager for my visit. . . . It is useless to undertake a mission and do nothing but pass through a place; one must stay in it, see the people, answer their questions, etc. and for all that, one needs time. . . . I shall end my missionary trip at Burlington. I shall have the honor of reporting to the Bishop of Boston, in whose territory I shall then be, for everything south of the lake belongs to him.<sup>70</sup>

His report of the visit is not available.

In the next year, in September, Father Mignault again planned a Vermont trip. He hoped to set out at the beginning of October, and he would like this time to continue on from Vergennes to Boston, to see the Bishop there, "to come to an understanding with him on the subject of the lake missions." He hoped also to bring back to Chambly the priest whom

<sup>69</sup> *New Hampshire Repository*, Concord (Congregationalist), Aug. 18, 1823.

<sup>70</sup> Father Mignault to Msgr. Panet (*Montreal Dioc. Arch.*).

Bishop Cheverus had practically promised him.<sup>71</sup> He was, however, prevented by illness from carrying out either plan.<sup>72</sup>

The priest he referred to was undoubtedly Rev. Patrick Byrne, whom the Bishop had ordained on March 18, 1820, and whom he sent to Father Mignault's house in Chambly the following January. The main reason for this was, of course, to help on the Vermont mission, but, as the Bishop wrote to a friend in Montreal, he himself had

been so edified there, that I imagine that there is, even in the air of Canada, something pious and priestly, and I hope that my young friend will breathe it in. . . . He understands French, and I hope that on his return, he will speak it easily and that he will also have made progress in what is even more essential. . . . If, perchance, he should be in need of money, please advance him up to \$50.<sup>73</sup>

Before October 8, 1821, Father Mignault had again visited the Vermont missions and this time had continued on to Boston, where he reported to Bishop Cheverus the state of those distant parts of the Diocese, and the impression made by the young Father Byrne.<sup>74</sup>

Father Byrne seems to have spent a whole year at Chambly, probably accompanying Father Mignault on the lake mission during the summer. He left Father Mignault's on February 19, 1822, and again visited the lake missions on his way to Boston, where he arrived before March 8th. The Bishop hoped to send him back there after Easter, but could not make a definite promise to do so, and eventually sent him to Maine, as has been said, to serve the Indians there.

Meanwhile he commissioned Father Paul McQuade to Vermont.<sup>75</sup> Perhaps he had not intended this last step at that time,

<sup>71</sup> Father Mignault to Archbishop Plessis, Sept. 22, 1820 (*Montreal Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>72</sup> To Msgr. Panet, Nov. 6, 1820 (*ibid.*).

<sup>73</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, Jan. 2, 1821 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

<sup>74</sup> He returned to Montreal by way of New York, where he saw Bishop England. Father Mignault to Archbishop Plessis, Oct. 8, 1821 (*Montreal Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>75</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Plessis, March 8, 1822; Father Mignault to Father Panet, March 19, 1822.

for he planned to visit Vermont himself in the near future. But "at the earnest solicitation of Messrs. White and Nichols, of Vergennes, converts to the faith, and a few other devout souls," he sent Father McQuade at once. When the priest went there, "a private room in the house of Mr. White, on the border of Otter Creek, twelve by fourteen feet, was . . . amply sufficient for altar, priest, and congregation."<sup>76</sup>

The Bishop was finally able to visit Vermont himself in late July.<sup>77</sup> The only known incident of that visit is the fact that he preached in the afternoon of Wednesday, July 29th, at the court-house in Windsor.<sup>78</sup> Undoubtedly, however, the Bishop also met the Catholics, talked with them, and said Mass for them, promising a longer sojourn on his return from Canada. On this return, the Bishop, accompanied by Father Turgeon, a Canadian priest who had to take a trip for his health, stayed in Vergennes a few days. On September 1st, the priest had four baptisms and sixteen communions, and the Bishop confirmed two persons. In the afternoon the Bishop also preached in the court-house. Reporting on this visit to his friend, Father Le Saulnier, of Montreal, he said, "I am leaving here the [set of] vestment[s] and the chalice which you gave me. The folk in this place are going to busy themselves about a small chapel."<sup>79</sup>

Meantime, Father McQuade had visited "Burlington, Middlebury, and other neighboring towns,"<sup>80</sup> and he returned to

<sup>76</sup> Father Fitton, *Sketches*, p. 242.

<sup>77</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, June 11, 1822.

<sup>78</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, July 31, 1822.

<sup>79</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, Sept. 2, 1822 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal). On Father Turgeon, cf. Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Plessis, Sept. 19, 1822.

*Note:* It is interesting to note here that the Bishop sent this letter from Vergennes to Montreal by "young Fitton, who is going [returning?] to the estimable Curé of Terrebonne." There is question also of young Samuel Walley, who apparently was going to enter Montreal College.

<sup>80</sup> Father Fitton. *op. cit.*, p. 242. Father Fitton gives the date 1821; it should be 1822. Father McQuade baptized in Boston on March 31, 1822, and not again until Sept. 16, 1822. He apparently returned to Boston with the Bishop and Father Turgeon. When the Bishop went to Montreal in June of 1821 and returned from there in July, did he not visit at Burlington? He was on the steamboat on Monday, July 9, 1821, returning to Boston, where he expected to arrive on Thursday (12th), Friday (13th), or Saturday (14th). On that trip he apparently did not see Father Mignault, who visited him in Boston in September (?).

Boston with the Bishop and Father Turgeon. We are left to surmise that afterwards the Vermont mission again came under the zealous care of Father Mignault.

## X

In the summer of 1818, a new mission was opened up in the State of New Hampshire. Its circumstances lent it a unique character. It was a mission destined to be composed almost, if not quite exclusively, of native American converts, under the lead first of a minister, and later of his son, also a minister, both of whom became Catholics. The scene of the mission was Claremont, a flourishing town a few miles south of Dartmouth College; the group of people concerned were members of the Episcopal parish there, and the minister was the Rev. Daniel Barber. He had been pastor there from the year 1795, and during his incumbency had succeeded through native energy and remarkable missionary zeal in raising the number of communicants from about forty-five or fifty to ninety-five.<sup>81</sup>

He had not always been an Episcopalian. Born October 2, 1756, at Simsbury, Connecticut, the eldest of a large family, Daniel Barber had been reared, according to the family tradition, a strict Calvinist. Toward the end of the Revolutionary War, in which he served for two or three short periods, he married Mrs. Chloe Owen Chase, also a Calvinist. After the end of the war he joined the Episcopal communion, drawn thereto particularly on the grounds of the authority of its "priesthood." Shortly afterwards, he served as lay-reader in some church or churches in Vermont.<sup>82</sup> Later, ordained deacon and then priest, he was settled in Manchester in that State.<sup>83</sup> Both before and after ordination, he was very active in church affairs in Vermont, especially in the interrelated subjects of the title to church lands and the setting up of a bishop. The same

<sup>81</sup> For this section the writer is under obligations for the large collection of copies of letters of the Barber family, most kindly furnished by Sister M. Martha Baues, Superior of the Academy of the Visitation, St. Louis, Missouri.

<sup>82</sup> A. Lowndes, ed., *Arch. of General Convention* (New York, 1912), III, 447.

<sup>83</sup> Thompson, *History of Vermont* (Burlington, 1842), II, 194.



subjects continued to interest him after he left Vermont and became rector of the Episcopal parish of Claremont, New Hampshire. For years he worked to have an Episcopal diocese set up in Western New Hampshire and Eastern Vermont, exactly where most of the Episcopal church lands were situated. Prominent also in the movement which culminated in the formation of the Eastern Diocese, composed of the four States, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, he was an important delegate at the Convention which elected Rev. Alexander Griswold as Bishop, in Boston on May 29, 1810. On September 26th, he was also elected, although not present, a member of the Standing Committee and of the Committee to present the new Bishop to the House of Bishops. From that time, at each biennial convention he was constantly reëlected to the Standing Committee. The 1818 Convention (held at Greenfield, Massachusetts, in September) was the first which dropped him from that post.

By that time he had plainly manifested his almost inevitable conversion to the Catholic Church. This change of allegiance was not the result of a sudden change of mind; it was the culmination of a spiritual experience of some eight years in length.<sup>84</sup> The sequence may well have run thus. The Episcopal minister being in Boston for the 1810 Convention was led by curiosity to attend Mass on Sunday in the Catholic church, which was then preparing to have one of its own priests as its Catholic bishop. On entering the church, which was the first of its kind he had ever seen, he observed other persons blessing themselves with the Sign of the Cross, and reflecting that 'as Episcopalians claimed to be a branch of the Catholic Church,' he also made use of the same token of faith.

Afterwards he commenced questioning the Catholic in the same pew and told him that he belonged to 'the Old Church of England.' The Catholic said 'the Church of England was not a

<sup>84</sup> D. Barber, *Catholic Worship and Piety* (Washington, 1821), pp. 31 ff.; *History of My Own Times* (Washington, 1828), II, 15, 16; Father Fitton to Sister M. Josephine, April 15, 1880 (*Visitation Arch.*, St. Louis, copy in Boston Dioc. Arch.); cf. Bishop L. De Goës Briand, *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire* (Burlington, Vt., 1886), pp. 14, 31.

very old one.' There were several results of this conversation. One was an introduction to Father "Shevereuse," who, by conversation and the gift of some books, gave him an understanding of the principal things "which made the separation" between the Episcopal and the Catholic Church. Another result was his getting a book by a Catholic author, in which "the first page he opened called his attention to the consecration of Archbishop Parker." It attacked the validity of that consecration and with it that of all Anglican orders. A third result was a fear that the ground on which he stood might prove hollow. A further result was his sending a letter to the learned Episcopalian, the Rev. John Hobart, destined to become the Episcopal Bishop of New York.<sup>85</sup>

No immediate step in the direction of the Catholic Church followed this important incident. He received no answer from Mr. Hobart, and although apprehensions about the truth of Episcopalianism had been definitely aroused in his mind, he continued to remain the pastor of his Episcopal parish in Claremont, and to receive and accept election in the Episcopal conventions of 1812, 1814, and 1816. Nevertheless, the books loaned by Bishop Cheverus did not remain without effect. They were read by the minister's family and some other persons, of whom "some appeared well convinced of the truths the books contained, and wished to see a priest, but the nearest one was a hundred miles distant." Others, however, among them some heads of the parish, began to complain, and Mr. Barber had to put the books under lock and key. Afterwards, through the connivance of some of his children, the books again found their way abroad, more privately. The minister himself was forcibly struck with what the books contained about the Apostolic practice of anointing, but other than asking questions, he went no further.<sup>86</sup>

On a certain occasion he read some striking passages out of

<sup>85</sup> Lowndes, *Arch. of General Convention*, VI, 447-449. There can be hardly any doubt that the Rev. Mr. Hobart was the "very learned clergyman" to whom Mr. Barber referred in the story of this incident, and from whom he received no answer. The letter was dated, Claremont, Aug. 2, 1810.

<sup>86</sup> *History*, II, 16, and *Catholic Worship*, p. 33.

these Catholic books to his son Virgil, and Virgil's wife, who came to visit him. Virgil was an Episcopal minister at that time, and he and his wife were quite untouched by any doubts as to their religion. "The name Catholic" sounded "harsh to them." Nevertheless, the son borrowed one of the books before he left for his own home.<sup>87</sup> "How little did I think," the father wrote, "that before I should see them again, himself and family would become converts and his wife a nun."

The story of the son's conversion is unique in the annals of the American Church. At the time he visited his father, he was hardly thirty years old. He was born May 9, 1783, probably in Simsbury, Connecticut. He received a good education, first at Cheshire Academy and Dartmouth College (1801-1803), and again at Cheshire, where he also acted as instructor. Ordained deacon of the Episcopal Church in June, 1805, he later served as curate and then pastor at Waterbury, Connecticut. He was ordained to the Anglican priesthood September 20, 1807. An earnest pastor, he was also a talented teacher and conducted a very good school in the parish. He likewise exhibited an unusual interest in theological questions and was a regular attendant at the diocesan conventions.

At the time when he and his wife made their visit (1811?-1813?) to Claremont, he does not appear to have had any leanings toward Catholicity. Nevertheless, by the month of March, 1814, when his son Samuel was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, Virgil had conceived a passionate admiration for a Catholic saint, the great Jesuit, Francis Xavier. Had his wife consented, he would have had the child named after him; but her ultimatum, "No Popish names in our family," prevented that.

How the young minister's attention had been drawn to the great modern Apostle of the Indies is not certain. Whether the saint's life had been the book he borrowed from his father or whether a *Novena to St. Francis*, belonging to a good Irish Catholic servant girl in the Barber family, had been the starting-point, a change of mind toward Catholicity set in.<sup>88</sup> He asked himself how a religion which formed such men as Xavier could

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>88</sup> Bishop De Goësbriand, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

be a mere human institution. Positive doubts about the truth of Protestantism were engendered. Neither study by himself nor consultation with his Bishop (Dr. Hobart in New York), nor conferences with his colleagues served to quiet his doubts. On the contrary, they finally led to a visit "to a Jesuit priest in New York," the Rev. Benedict Fenwick (1816).

Meanwhile, he had left Waterbury (May 6, 1814) and became the head of an (Episcopal?) academy and parish in Fairfield, not far from Utica, New York. This gave him a comfortable living for himself, his wife, and five children. He had also bought land there which promised to become valuable in time. Conversion to the Catholic Church meant losing these positions and prospects and jeopardizing his family's future. Despite all these reasons for remaining as he had been, Virgil Barber became a Catholic, as did his wife also. The two went to New York and made their profession of faith in Father Fenwick's presence, shortly before Christmas, 1816. They solved the problem of support by keeping a school in New York, and they prepared fervently for their first communion. Hardly was this made (February 9, 1817) when they sought to take a new and unusual step in the way in which they had entered. Virgil, being desirous of the priesthood, and his wife desirous, on her side, to second his wishes, they revealed the matter to Father Fenwick, through whom it was finally arranged with Archbishop Neale. Virgil was to enter the Society of Jesus, his wife the Order of the Visitation, the three eldest children were to be received as boarding-pupils into the Convent of the Visitation, and the two youngest were to be cared for by Father Fenwick's mother.

These arrangements were carried out. Virgil set off to Rome to make his noviceship and all went well with the family until Mrs. Barber abruptly left the convent (October 24, 1817). She was worried over the illness of her baby and the support of her other children. From then on everything seemed to go wrong. Although Virgil, who rushed back from Rome at the news, found Mrs. Barber already returned to the convent, the nerve-racking problem of the children's support remained. Until it



could be solved, nothing apparently could be done about his continuing as a Jesuit; indeed, there was some thought of his becoming a secular priest.<sup>89</sup>

In this difficulty Virgil must have written to his parents in New Hampshire in the summer of 1818 and been invited (by his mother) to visit them and, if possible, to bring with him a priest. So he went to Claremont with Father Ffrench, a priest then attached to the Diocese of New York. The visit turned into something much wider in scope than the matter of supporting Virgil's children. It brought to a head the conversion of his mother, sister, aunt, and cousin, and several others, and finally of his own father.<sup>90</sup> Among those who did not become Catholics the priest's visit and the conversion of people close to the minister occasioned an alarm which did not subside after the priest's departure. The old minister, although he had not joined the Catholic Church, evidently spoke in favor of many of its doctrines, and "rumors ran concerning his defection and not a little dissatisfaction existed."<sup>91</sup>

Late in September (the 27th), the Episcopal Bishop, Dr. Griswold, visited Claremont. He was on his way to the convention that was to meet at Greenfield on the 30th. Although at the end of this visit the Bishop felt that he had "brought the minister to an agreement about his future conduct,"<sup>92</sup> the

<sup>89</sup> Bishop De Goësbriand's *Catholic Memoirs* prints most of the pertinent documents, including Bishop Fenwick's account of V. Barber's conversion and the *Memoirs* of Sister Josephine Barber. See also for Virgil's period in Waterbury, F. J. Kingsbury, *Narrative and Documentary History of . . . Episcopal Church of Waterbury* (New Haven, 1907).

<sup>90</sup> Virgil would hardly have brought Father Ffrench with him spontaneously, because Claremont was in the Diocese of Boston. There had been a previous request for a priest from Claremont, "but the nearest priest was a hundred miles distant." That request would probably have been made to Bishop Cheverus; and the reason for non-compliance with it also probably came from him. If it had been made after June, 1818, such a reply would be natural, for Father Matignon was ill. Bishop Cheverus might well have answered that he himself couldn't come just then, but that he would grant faculties to any priest in good standing whom they could get: and he might even have suggested the itinerant missionary of the New York Diocese. The speedy conversion of old Mrs. Barber after Father Ffrench's arrival gives added probability to the hypothesis just suggested.

<sup>91</sup> O. Waite, *History of Claremont* (Manchester, 1805), p. 103.

<sup>92</sup> Dr. Griswold to Claremont Vestry, Nov. 6, 1818, in *Journal of Episcopal Visitations, Arch. Epis. Dioc. of Mass.*

Claremont vestry seemed less easily satisfied.<sup>93</sup> On November 12th, the vestry voted to dismiss Mr. Barber, paying him all dues and one hundred dollars in addition. The following Sunday (November 15th), the old minister preached his farewell sermon, taking as text, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church" and "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."<sup>94</sup> He then departed for Georgetown, where Virgil was.

During the next three years (1819-1821), he lived there, in Washington and in St. Inigoes, St. Mary's County, Maryland, and was probably formally received into the Catholic Church.<sup>95</sup>

From the time of his leaving Claremont, old Mr. Barber kept his mind fixed upon two objects, supporting his family and aiding the Catholic cause in Claremont. With the same practical ability which had always characterized him, he seems to have arranged an agreement with the Jesuit Superior, Father Kohlmann, to take care of both these objects. In return he offered the Jesuits the use or the ownership of part of his property in Claremont. The financial crisis in Virgil's life was no more heard of, and both Virgil and his wife made their final vows on February 2, 1820.<sup>96</sup>

The old gentleman clearly expected that the Jesuits would send a priest to Claremont and hoped that Virgil would be there eventually. Meanwhile, he also provided for the future of the church in Claremont by explaining and defending Cath-

<sup>93</sup> See C. Batchelder, *History of the Eastern Diocese* (Claremont, 1876), I, 210.

<sup>94</sup> D. Barber, *Catholic Worship*, pp. 35-37; and *History*, I, 44-46; Batchelder, *op. cit.*, I, 211.

<sup>95</sup> Bishop De Goësbriand, *Catholic Memoirs*, p. 35; D. Barber, *Catholic Worship* (Washington, 1821). See the letters contained therein, dated from St. Inigoes, Dec., 1819, and August 21, 1820.

*Note:* Mrs. D. Barber was probably with him, and also Mrs. Tyler and Rosetta Tyler. The lastnamed entered the convent at Emmitsburg in 1820, and was later sent to New York with the group who founded the orphanage there. While in Georgetown, she had resided some time with Father B. Fenwick's mother: and this suggests that the same hospitable matron was hostess likewise to Mrs. Tyler, and to the three (?) Barbers (Daniel, Mrs. Daniel, and Laura). See Barber to Father Dzierozynski, March 17, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*, 206 S 9).

<sup>96</sup> Father Marshall to Archbishop Neale, Jan. 20, 1821; Archbishop Neale to Father Marshall, Feb. 14, and March 29, 1821; Father Marshall's Statement, Jan. 1, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*, 205 D 6 7 and 8; 206 P 1). Father McElroy's *Journal*, Feb. 2, 1820 (in *Georgetown Coll. Arch.*).

olic doctrine in letters to friends there. Some of these letters he afterwards incorporated into his book, *Catholic Worship and Piety*, published in Washington in 1821.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, in the early part of 1822, old Mr. Barber returned to Claremont and resumed there the work which had been begun through him. He was in constant communication with Bishop Cheverus, who aided him financially and purchased some copies of his pamphlet, and who soon sent Father Taylor to preach a "little" mission in Claremont. This priest returned to Boston before June 11th, "edified and charmed by the good old Mr. Barber," who had "done so much good there,"<sup>98</sup> and able to report an important addition to the Claremont flock, through the conversion of Captain Bela Chase and his family, residents of Cornish. Mr. Chase's family consisted of his wife Alice, and three children, aged nine, six, and three respectively. He had been clerk of the Episcopal church in Cornish, and was regarded as a "quiet and unpretending [man] and of strict integrity."<sup>99</sup> Probably at the same time the rest of the Tyler family, the father, three daughters, and William, also became Catholics.

That same summer Bishop Cheverus himself visited Claremont twice, on his way to and from Canada.<sup>100</sup> Before leaving Boston for the north, he had received a letter from the Jesuit Superior at Georgetown about the Claremont situation. It evidently had to do with care of that new Catholic group until Virgil Barber could be ordained, and contained the suggestions that Father Cooper, a Baltimore priest, could go to Claremont, and that 'it might not perhaps be deemed improper to ordain old Mr. Barber.' Virgil would probably be ordained when the Archbishop returned from Europe, and would then be sent to

<sup>97</sup> Cf. also D. Barber to George Fenwick (*Fordham Arch.*, 205 M 4).

<sup>98</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, June 11, 1822 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal); Bishop Cheverus' *Account Book*.

<sup>99</sup> He was born in 1784, W. H. Child, *History of Cornish* (2 vols.: Concord, N.H., 1911?), I, 384; II, 63.

<sup>100</sup> The earlier visit was put in between a departure from Boston on July 23rd or 24th, and an arrival in Windsor, Vermont, on the 28th or 29th. The later visit took place between a departure from Vergennes on Sept. 3rd and an arrival in Boston on Sept. 18th.

Claremont, his natural destination.<sup>101</sup> This letter, together with the Bishop's personal knowledge of Daniel Barber, may have been the motivating causes of the Bishop's conferring minor orders on the old gentleman.<sup>102</sup>

It was probably on the same occasion that the Bishop received from Mr. Daniel Barber a gift of some land on which to build a church. It was also probably on the occasion of one of these visits that the Bishop baptized Bela Chase's sister Sarah, then a woman of thirty-five years, who later joined the Ursulines in Boston.<sup>103</sup> It is not known whether the Bishop baptized any others in Claremont, but it is certain that he found there a number of persons well disposed to the Church.<sup>104</sup>

He did not accept the Jesuit Superior's suggestion about sending Father Cooper to Claremont; but he evidently did make a counter-suggestion. He offered to ordain Virgil Barber himself as soon as possible, to serve at least temporarily at Claremont, and give him an opportunity to help support his father. It was with this understanding that Virgil, with his Superior's approval, set out shortly thereafter for Boston, where he was ordained by Bishop Cheverus, receiving subdiaconate on December 1st, diaconate on December 2nd, and priesthood on his beloved St. Francis Xavier's feast, December 3, 1822.<sup>105</sup> Having administered his first baptisms in Boston on December 5th, he directed his way to Claremont, where he arrived probably for Christmas.

<sup>101</sup> Father Kohlmann to Bishop Cheverus, June 18, 1822 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal).

<sup>102</sup> Father Fitton, writing to Sister M. Josephine, April 6, 1880, says that her article in the *Ave Maria* referred to her grandfather as a deacon. Father Fitton tells her that he never heard of his having been ordained a deacon, but that he did know of his having received minor orders. An anonymous French manuscript in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*, written ca. 1825, speaks of Daniel Barber's having "desired to receive minor orders and the permission to preach, Bishop Cheverus granted both the one and the other." See also *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, V (1894), 460, for another independent testimony of Daniel's having received minor orders. Perhaps Daniel had long desired these orders, and had so expressed himself both to Father Kohlmann and to Bishop Cheverus.

<sup>103</sup> *Les Ursulines des Trois Rivières* (Montreal, 1898), II, 260.

<sup>104</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 27, 1823.

<sup>105</sup> *Boston Dioc. Register*, and V. Barber to Father Dzierozynski, March 1, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*, 206 P 22).



One can better imagine than describe the joy that this culmination of hopes occasioned both in the convent at Georgetown, where his own immediate family were spiritually offering their sacrifices with his, and in Claremont, where father and mother, sister and brother, received his first priestly blessing.

On his journey from the South to Boston, Father Virgil had collected money for what would be the first Catholic church in New Hampshire, and he immediately set about its erection. The cornerstone was laid on June 19, 1823.<sup>106</sup> The church was named St. Mary's, perhaps at Bishop Cheverus' request, because we may surmise that, had the choice rested wholly with Father Barber, it would have been called St. Francis Xavier. It was a "little church [the whole building twenty feet by forty-eight] with a hall above, for a study room and two small rooms for the classes." The church was not built on the land given to Bishop Cheverus for that purpose, but on the land immediately adjoining Mr. Barber's house, of which it formed a front wing, evidencing the priest's purpose to conduct a school there as well as a church. In fact, in the autumn he opened a school which he named the Claremont Catholic Seminary. It was the first Catholic boys' school in New England, and the first Jesuit school likewise. Bishop Cheverus' hope of 1810 to have a Jesuit school in the Diocese was thus answered.

This school had an immediate success. A catalogue of the students, published by themselves, contained nearly fifty names. The boys were boarded out in the town at a total cost for board and tuition of one dollar a week.<sup>107</sup> In mid-December, 1823, Father Barber went to Canada on a successful two months' collection tour, for the school's further development and the success of his own hopes. He believed, for example, that

the hope of the Society of Jesus must be planted in New England. Here, and not at the South, schools of learning meet with every encouragement, and here subjects for the Society may be found in abundance. In my school, small as it is, there are five or six [boys] of this description.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> *New Hampshire Statesman*, Concord, July 14, 1823.

<sup>107</sup> *Claremont Spectator*, Oct. 15, 1823.

<sup>108</sup> To Father Dzierozynski, March 17, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*).

From the collections obtained in Canada, Father Barber was enabled to put up his school building. It also took the form of a wing to his father's house, matching that which the church formed on the other side. The combination of the two wings with the paternal mansion "provided two convenient rooms and corresponding chambers above in the front, a middle room for a small refectory, with a kitchen and cellar below." His father, mother, and an unmarried brother lived in the rear. These buildings, with the beautiful twenty-acre lot on which they were set, offered a lovely site for the school. The headmaster himself was an experienced and talented director. A characteristic touch was the regulation that students must wear the school uniform, consisting "of a blue frock coat, seamed with yellow buff, and tied around with a red flowing sash." Father Barber found that "it strikes the taste of the country and produces an agreeable impression."

Although the new establishment brought many applications from students for boarding-in, nevertheless, Father Barber, being extremely cautious about admitting any persons of doubtful character and disposition, received at first only three. Besides these, he had some twenty day-scholars. One of the students, undoubtedly a boarder, was a young cousin of his, named William Tyler, who was then about eighteen years of age, and hoped to become a priest and a Jesuit. Father Barber spoke of him as "certainly a young man of considerable merit. He was, when a child, of the protestant religion, as were his parents, but he now proves, like them, a catholic full of zeal." He was the prefect of the house, attending the students during study and recreation.<sup>109</sup>

On August 6, 1824, the *Claremont Spectator* carried a very complimentary account of the school. This concluded with the words:

Possessing, as this Institution does, the confidence and patronage of our most respectable citizens, notwithstanding the obstacles which religious prejudice threaten to throw in the way

<sup>109</sup> To Father Dzierozynski, March 17, 1824.

of its prosperity, and combining the advantages of a beautiful and healthy situation, cheapness of living and, more than all, a Principal capable of advancing his students to any class of college study, it must become useful in proportion as its advantages are extensively known and duly appreciated!

That fall term the school had among its boarders Francis Smithwick, James Fitton, Matthew Cottrill, Samuel Walley, and Michael Jordan, two of whom, at least, had been transferred there from Montreal College. Thus Father Barber's school had become the preparatory seminary of the Diocese.

Meanwhile, the parish also had been progressing. In early May, 1824, Daniel Barber's

old organist brought his new organ into our little St. Mary's Church and began the next Sunday to assist at High Mass.

It is really wonderful [Mr. Barber wrote], when we notice the change which has taken place within the last year, and how rapidly that former bitterness is giving way to kinder and more generous feelings for the Catholic cause. According to the present order on Sundays, I preach in the morning and my son in the evening after Vespers. Our little church is often quite full and the greatest number of hearers are Protestant.<sup>110</sup>

In the postscript to this letter, Daniel says,

Please give my best respects to our Rev'd Superior — tell him that in my last Will and Testament I have conveyed the ground on which the church now stands to him and his successors forever.

In fact, the old gentleman soon went further, and by a deed, executed on June 7, 1824, conveyed to the Jesuit Superior and to his heirs and assigns forever all the lands and property he owned in Claremont, except

A small piece sixty feet on the highway and running back one hundred feet, which I not long since deeded to the Right Rev-

<sup>110</sup> Daniel Barber to Charles Wharton of Washington, May 13, 1824 (*Fordham Arch.*, 206 N 14).

erend Doct. Sheveras [*sic*] late Bishop of Boston with a design of building thereon the said St. Mary's Church.<sup>111</sup>

There is nothing known of the fortunes of the parish or its pastor in 1825, except that Mrs. Daniel Barber died in February of that year, attended by her son, and that in September, Father Virgil Barber went South to see Father Benedict Fenwick, the newly elected Bishop of Boston, and his own guide into the Catholic Church. He arranged with the new Bishop to place his daughters in the Ursuline Convents of Boston and Quebec (Mary to Boston, and Abby to Quebec). On November 14, 1825, he and all his family were assembled for the last time, after which he himself returned to his work in Claremont under the new Bishop.

## XI

The beginnings of Catholicity in Connecticut are shrouded in obscurity. It has already been mentioned that after the departure of Father Tisserant in 1804, the Catholic history of the State is almost a blank until 1817. Even after that, there is no sure evidence of the existence of a Catholic congregation in the State until the year 1823, when some Catholics in Hartford invited Bishop Cheverus to send them a priest.<sup>112</sup> There is good extant evidence that Bishop Cheverus visited New Haven in the year 1817 (December 31st), and there is reason to believe that he visited either New Haven or Hartford in the year 1819. Both of the visits had to do with the conversion of an Episcopal minister, the Rev. Calvin White, at those dates resident in Derby, Connecticut.

Rev. Mr. White, who had once been a Presbyterian, was having difficulties about the truth of Episcopalianism, about the same period as Rev. Virgil Barber, and another Episcopal

<sup>111</sup> He also made a reservation in favor of his son Truworth, *Cheshire County Register*, book 96, p. 411.

<sup>112</sup> *Boston Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842. This account, taken from the earliest known story of the Church in Hartford, is quite evidently based on traditions which; however, are confused in their presentation. It states that Bishop Cheverus visited Hartford in 1819 and 1820.



minister in New York, the less known Rev. John Kewley. Like them he, too, in the end became a Catholic. There is also some reason to believe that he had a connection with the beginnings of organized Catholicity in Connecticut. This will appear in the sequel. A witty spirit, as his letters abundantly show, he was likewise sincere and serious. Already in May, 1817, when there was question of a separate Episcopal bishop for Connecticut, he seems to have been favorably inclined to the idea of seeing the State put under "the Catholic Bishop of New York" rather than under the Episcopal bishop of that city. That startling viewpoint found explanation in June of the same year in his own frank statement to a learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Tillotson Bronson: that he had for some time past doubted the claim of the Anglican Church to be the one Catholic Apostolic Church.<sup>113</sup> He ended this letter by asking his correspondent, "dear Sir, have you read *The Catholic Question in America?*"<sup>114</sup>

The book referred to, published in New York in 1813, had made quite a stir. It was the report of a test case on the secrecy of the Confessional, tried in that city. In the case, the Jesuit, Father Kohlmann, was the most prominent figure. The book had an appendix on Confession, and was published under Jesuit auspices. It had evidently made an impression on Mr. White, the next phase of whose story shows him in touch with the Jesuits of New York and with Bishop Cheverus of Boston. He had written to Father Kohlmann and received from him authorities in proof of the Papal claim. He had met Bishop Cheverus by appointment in New Haven and was said to be doing everything in his power to promote that cause.<sup>115</sup> Finally,

<sup>113</sup> June 9, 1817, *Arch. of the Prot. Episc. Diocese of Conn.* All the Calvin White correspondence mentioned here is in the same place.

<sup>114</sup> Rev. Calvin White to Rev. T. Bronson, June 9, 1817.

<sup>115</sup> Croswell to Hobart, Feb. 8, 1819.

Bishop Cheverus was in New Haven on Dec. 31, 1817, when he was returning to Boston from Baltimore and New York. Father Kohlmann, who had left New York in January, 1815, was made Superior of the Society of Jesus in the United States Sept. 10, 1817. He fixed his residence at Georgetown, where he issued a pamphlet on the Reformation Centennial Jubilee. The first edition of this was published before Oct. 31, 1817, and after July 16, 1817. See Parsons, *Catholic Americana*, p. 134 (550).

on September 8, 1819, Mr. White wrote a formal letter to the Standing Committee, announcing his decision:

As in duty bound, this informs you [that] I have "reposed myself in the bosom of the Catholic Church" in full belief that this is a [*sic*] true church of Christ. May all the injuries given, or received, be buried at the foot of the cross — peace be multiplied. The blessed day draws nigh, when the dividing names of Protestant and Papist shall be lost in that of Christian and Catholic, and that unity perfected for which Jesus prayed, when he lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, "Father, may they be one."<sup>116</sup>

When and to whom Mr. White made his profession of the Catholic Faith is unknown. There is always the possibility that he did so in the presence of Bishop Cheverus, and this seems confirmed by the tradition that the Bishop visited Connecticut in the year 1819. (That would have been around September, 1819.)

Mr. White continued to reside in his old rectory at Derby, as a model Catholic layman down to his death on March 21, 1853. He made a number of converts to the Catholic Faith, but also remained on excellent terms with his old Episcopal friends. It was later said of him that "throughout his long life, Mr. White was honored and loved by all who knew him."<sup>117</sup> His sentiments not long after his conversion may be understood by a letter which he wrote to his old friend Dr. Bronson on June 15, 1824, from Derby:

Revd and Dear Brother

. . . whether Dr Brunson be a Catholic in our import of the Phrase or Not, we respect him; yes, we respect the Protestant Ep Chh on account of the Rock from which she has been hewn and the Pit from which she has been digged; we admire her Translation of the Bible with all its imperfections, as a Noble work; we prize her Liturgy as only less perfect than that from which it has principally been extracted; we venerate her Hierarchy as the very Image of the Truth, for we catholics

<sup>116</sup> See Noble to Bronson, Oct. 7, 1819.

<sup>117</sup> A. Lowndes, ed., *Archives of the General Convention* (New York, 1912). III, 323 ff.

give veneration to *Images on account* of what they represent. . . . Dear Sir, I am more confirmed — that if God has a Chh on earth *it is, it must* be the Catholic chh. If *it is not* so, I would not give a cent for the Bible and very little for existance. . . .<sup>118</sup>

In 1823 he was present in Hartford, just when the Catholic congregation there had its visit from Bishop Cheverus; indeed, he was godfather at the first baptism performed by the Bishop on that occasion. He may even have had something to do in the formation of that church. Pursuing this possibility, one may note that the Rev. Virgil Barber passed through Connecticut in the late autumn of the year 1822 on his way from the South to Boston to be ordained by Bishop Cheverus. A meeting between him and Mr. White would have been most natural, and is to be presumed. That would help to explain the formation of the Hartford congregation.

There is, furthermore, a third incident to be noticed in the same connection. Hartford tradition definitely connects the name of Father William Taylor with the beginnings of the church there. It states specifically that he visited Hartford in 1820, when on his way from Canada to Boston.<sup>119</sup> That tradition could well be founded on fact, not for 1820, indeed, but for 1822, when, it is known, Father Taylor had been in Canada and did return from there to Boston.<sup>120</sup>

At all events, on the 3rd of February, 1823, some Catholics of Hartford wrote Bishop Cheverus a letter to which he replied as follows:

Boston, February 7, 1823.

To the Roman Catholics residing at and near Hartford.

My beloved friends and children in Jesus Christ:

Your letter of the 3d inst. has been duly received, and has afforded me great gratification. I wish I could go immediately

<sup>118</sup> Rev. Calvin White to Rev. Tillotson Bronson, June 15, 1824 (*Arch. P. E. Dioc., Conn.*).

<sup>119</sup> *Boston Pilot*, Feb. 19, 1842.

<sup>120</sup> Father Taylor to Ed. Kavanagh, Sept. 21, 1822 (*Portland Dioc. Arch.*). The *Boston Baptismal Register* shows that he was back in Boston before Nov. 24, 1822. The previous year, 1821, also holds a *possibility* of Father Taylor's having visited Hartford on his way from New York to Boston.

and pay you a visit, but it is out of my power to go till after Easter. I shall give you notice a fortnight before my going. In the meantime, you will do well to procure a room and meet every Sunday to perform together your devotions. Let one who reads well and has a clear voice, read the prayers of Mass, a sermon, or some instruction out of a Catholic book. If you are destitute of books, let me know, and I shall send some at the first opportunity.

During the ensuing Lent, which is to begin next Wednesday, flesh meat is allowed Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, except the last, or Holy Week, but only once a day except on Sundays.

I am happy to hear that you openly profess your religion. Never be ashamed of it, nor of its practices; and, above all, do honor to it by irreproachable conduct. Be sober, honest, and industrious; serve faithfully those who employ you, and show that a good Catholic is a good member of society, that he feels grateful to those who are kind to strangers, and sincerely loves his brethren of all persuasions, though he strictly adheres to the doctrines of his own church. It is thus, my beloved friends, that you will silence prejudice and win the esteem and favor of all the inhabitants of this hospitable country. Be assured that nothing I can do will be wanting on my part to promote your spiritual welfare. At my first visit, we may fix upon regular periods when one of my reverend brethren, or myself, will go to administer to you the sacred rites of our holy religion. With affectionate and paternal regard, and fervently imploring upon you all the blessings of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,

I remain your friend and pastor,

John Cheverus, Bishop of Boston.<sup>121</sup>

The Bishop went to Hartford in May. A very interesting account of his visit was written by an old Hartford Catholic in 1880.<sup>122</sup>

The first baptism performed by the Bishop on this occasion

<sup>121</sup> J. O'Donnell, "The Diocese of Hartford," in *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, II, 182.

<sup>122</sup> Thomas McManus, *Historical Sketch of the Catholic Church in Hartford* (Hartford Press of Clark & Smith), 1880.



was for Francis Clerc, the son of a famous Hartford Catholic, Laurent Clerc. This Mr. Clerc had been a student and then a professor in the world-famous school for the deaf conducted by the French priest, the Abbé Sicard, at Paris, and had been invited to become director of a new school for the deaf at Hartford that was projected by some non-Catholic humanitarians of that city. In accepting the offer, Clerc stipulated that he was "not to be called upon to teach anything contrary to the Catholic religion." When he came to America, he brought with him a letter of introduction from his old chief to Bishop Cheverus, containing, among other things, the words: "I send to the United States the best taught of my pupils, a deaf-mute, whom my art has restored to society and religion. He goes fully resolved to live and be faithful to the principles of the Catholic religion, which I have taught him." Clerc came to Boston in 1816, at which time he was described by one who saw him as "a good looking man, twenty-eight years old, of elegant manners, and a cheerful countenance. On June 15th, he began to study the English language, under the tuition of Mr. Gallaudet, of Hartford, Connecticut, and he can now readily understand what is written to him and, in the same way, makes surprisingly correct answers."<sup>123</sup>

In Hartford, he had little, if any, opportunity to practice his religion and by his position was thrown into constant contact with Protestants. In 1819, he married an Episcopalian. It is known, however, that he was in contact with Bishop Cheverus that same year and the next.<sup>124</sup> He also remained sufficiently attached to his religion to have "his oldest son, Francis, baptized by Bishop Cheverus, when the latter visited Hartford in May, 1823." The godfather was Mr. Calvin White.<sup>125</sup>

From Hartford, Bishop Cheverus continued on his way to New Haven. It was on this occasion, according to Father O'Donnell's excellent History of Hartford Diocese, that he

<sup>123</sup> Rev. John Pierce, *Memoirs*, Sept. 12, 1816 (ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc.*).

<sup>124</sup> *Cath. Encycl.*, V, 317-318; T. Duggan, *The Catholic Church in Connecticut* (New York, 1930), pp. 21 ff.; Bishop Cheverus' *Account Book*, pp. 40-41, for Sept. 21, 1819, and Jan. 10, 1820.

<sup>125</sup> *Boston Diocesan Register*.

stayed at the house of a French professor of Yale University, who lived on York Street. He is also said to have celebrated Mass at that house.<sup>126</sup> The Bishop continued his visit in Connecticut by going to New London, where he was on June 1, 1823. That day he baptized two children. The record runs:

Baptized Thomas, born January 4, 1821. Sponsor: J. B. Walbach, Honora, born December 4, 1822. Sponsor: John O'Brien. Both children of Richard and Catharine Morris.

A local historian says of Bishop Cheverus' visit:

There was at the time, we believe; but a single family of Roman Catholics in the town — that of Colonel Walbach, who was commandant at the fort for many years. He had a pew at St. James' (Protestant), and himself and family were regular attendants upon its services, joining in the worship of the church with apparent interest and devotion. A priest of their own profession came to visit them occasionally, and give them the rites of their church. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston at that time was Dr. Cheverus, a man whose amiable, pure and benevolent character secured the respect of men of all creeds and conditions. On one occasion, he came to New London to pass a Sunday with the family which has been mentioned. The rector took occasion to invite him to preach at St. James' in the afternoon. He accepted the invitation, and at the usual hour of service came to the church in the costume of his office, and after reading some English prayers from the desk, preached a sermon from the pulpit. A crowded congregation assembled to hear him, for in those days a Romish Bishop, in the attire of his office, was a lion indeed. Fortunately, to secure us against any charge of tendency to Popery, our Congregational neighbors invited him to preach for them also at a later hour. It was a long summer day. A crowd assembled at the appointed hour. The Bishop came in his robes, and after offering an extempore prayer, delivered a sermon upon Martha and Mary from the pulpit of the Congregational church.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, II, 325.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 403 f.

The Colonel Walbach mentioned in this account was a brother-in-law of Father De Barth of Philadelphia (elected Bishop of that city in 1816), and had previously been attached to Fort Constitution, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He was well known to the Bishop, who had visited him in Portsmouth on September 21, 1811, on which occasion the Bishop baptized his son, John Joseph. On November 19, 1815, the Colonel's daughter Frances had been baptized by Father Romagné in the same place. In New London, he was the Bishop's host, at the fort, and the Bishop said Mass there.

During the Bishop's visits in Connecticut, whether in New London or some other place is not certain, he included in a sermon a refutation of an anti-Catholic book that had recently been reprinted in Hartford. It was the infamous *Master Key to Popery*, by Anthony Gavin.<sup>128</sup> The evidence for this comes from a writer in the *New York Truth-Teller*, of October 7, 1826, and it serves a double purpose; for it also mentions a priest who visited Connecticut, after Bishop Cheverus. The story goes:

We recollect to have spent an agreeable night in the society of an educated Catholic clergyman, at an inn in Connecticut. The clergyman, after instructing us much by his conversation, seemed affected with ennui, and asked the lady of the house for a book. She politely handed him a book entitled "The Master Key to Popery, by the Rev. Anthony Gavin, priest of Saragossa"; which was, from the title to the last page, a repulsive and calumnious caricature of the Roman Catholic Church form of auricular confession; a filthy dialogue between a friar and a nun was introduced. . . . The clergyman called the lady, and asked her, "Pray, Madam, where was this book printed?" "At Hartford," she replied. "Do you believe, madam, what it states regarding the Catholic religion?" "I did formerly, sir," said she, "but now I do not, for a Catholic Bishop [Chev-

<sup>128</sup> *The Master Key to Popery by Anthony Gavin, combined with John Coustos. The Mysteries of Popery unveiled in the Unparalleled Sufferings of John Coustos at the Inquisition of Lisbon, to which is added the Origin of the Inquisition and its Establishment in Various Countries; and the Master Key to Popery by Anthony Gavin* (Hartford, 1821).

erus] preached here and proved that the writer, and the ministers who induced him to undertake the work, had been telling lies of the Catholics, and that the Catholics had been calumniated . . . our sympathies were in favour of the injured and we are now certain that too many lies have been told of the Romans." <sup>129</sup>

Thus, in one after the other of the New England States, the first Bishop of Boston continued in his last years here the kind of missionary life which had marked his first years.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>129</sup> The priest mentioned may have been Father Taylor or Father Barber.

<sup>130</sup> There were also other places visited by the priests of the Diocese in these years. For example, East Chelmsford, which is now Lowell, Massachusetts, where the Bishop had baptized in 1814, was visited by Father Byrne on Aug. 20, 1822. The story of the church formed in that new district is fully told in the third part of this history, volume II.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE LAST YEARS OF BISHOP CHEVERUS IN BOSTON — II (1819-1823)

#### *Relations with Non-Catholics*

SUCCESS in breaking down Protestant prejudice had marked the whole careers of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus in Boston. During the latter years that fact was mentioned apparently everywhere. In Catholic circles, it was pointed out by Archbishop Maréchal in his report to Rome already cited, and by Father Grassi, the former Superior of the Jesuits in this country, in his account of the Church in America.<sup>1</sup> A more remarkable statement along this same line came from the pen of an outstanding Protestant, a prominent Boston lawyer, who was contrasting the spirit of 1818 with that of 1788, when the Catholic Church here was founded. He referred to that foundation as an event so remarkable that it "could only be surpassed by devoting a chamber in the Vatican to a Protestant chapel."

Our ancestors [he declared] had a ten-fold horror of the Church of Rome: they first seceded from the English Church, because they suspected some of the prelates of a leaning to Popery. When they came to America [he continued] they brought with them and carefully nourished all the prejudices and fears that could be produced from the junction of political jealousy and religious bigotry. [Their experience in the French and Indian wars] kept their animosity alive, and the Prince of Darkness himself was hardly more an object of horror to them than a Jesuit. They preached and prayed most stoutly and fervently against the scarlet lady of Babylon, the anti-Christ of Rome, and even down to the last generation, used all the trite terms of vituperation that were so often applied to the Pope. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Cited in *Am. Cath. Hist. Researches*, VIII (1891), 100. Father Grassi referred to conditions in Boston in 1817.

All feelings of this kind have [now] so nearly subsided that the past generation can hardly picture to themselves the bigotry that oppressed even the last. The Pope is no longer an object of fear, and if the Catholic religion could get rid of some of its encumbrances, which are now not only burdensome but ridiculous, and revert to the simplicity of primitive institutions, many classes of Protestants would approach them without distrust, and the most ancient Christian Church be regarded with higher reverence.<sup>2</sup>

This same Bostonian attributed this change of spirit not only to the liberality of Protestants, but to the work and character of Fathers Matignon and Cheverus.

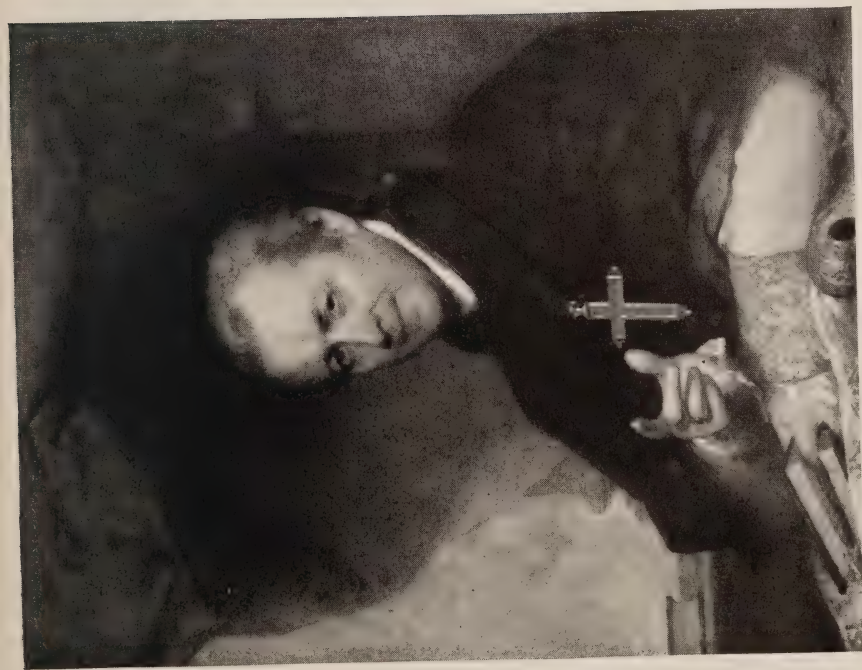
Two individuals [he wrote] of great acquirements, full of charity and piety, driven from their [own] distracted country, received the charge of this infant church [which he remarked in another place, had been unfortunate in its first pastors]. They have fulfilled the numerous parochial duties required by the Catholic religion, with apostolical simplicity and evangelical zeal, neither attempting to make proselytes nor to excite controversy: and I presume it cannot be disputed, and I hope it will not be considered invidious to say (the circumstances of their congregations being taken into view) that their ministry is by far the most arduous and useful in the town. [*Note: one of the gentlemen alluded to is since dead.*]<sup>3</sup>

## I

The two Catholic priests had acquired this place in the esteem of Bostonians, particularly by their Christ-like care of the poor, and by the undoubted benefit to the public good which resulted from their work. Together with this quasi-official character their eminently respectable and winning per-

<sup>2</sup> Wm. Tudor, *Letters on the Eastern States* (1st ed.: New York, 1820), pp. 69 ff. Preface is dated April, 1820. The passage in question was evidently written before Father Matignon's death in Sept., 1818. See p. 71, n.

<sup>3</sup> Tudor, *op. cit.*, p. 71; cf. also John Adams, *Statesman and Friend, Correspondence with Benj. Waterhouse*, edited by W. Ford (Boston, 1927), p. 117, May 30, 1815. "Does Jonathan think the Roman Catholic priests of Boston the best priests of Boston?"



BISHOP CHEVERUS



ARCHBISHOP CHEVERUS OF BORDEAUX





sonalities aided tremendously. From the beginning of their pastorate here, they had made friendly contact with some members of the Boston merchant class, especially with those that handled French and West Indian business. Among them the Perkins brothers, who have already been mentioned, long continued their kindly feeling to the French clergy. Among the other members of this group Samuel May was also their early, devoted, and continued friend. His business brought him into relations with Canada and he performed many commissions for Father Matignon. After the pastor's death he maintained the same cordial relations with the Bishop. He was even described as "the bosom friend of Bishop Cheverus," and "his best friend in Boston."<sup>4</sup> A certain Bryant P. Tilden, a "Boston merchant who at times visited Baltimore," is also spoken of as one who often performed commissions for the Boston priests there.<sup>5</sup> Nor should the many ship captains, coastwise and oceangoing, be forgotten with whom especially Father Matignon's relations were frequent and intimate.

Emphasis has already been laid on the generous treatment accorded Father Matignon from the beginning by the banker Thomas Russell, Sr., the editor, Benjamin Russell, of the *Columbian Centinel*, Governor Strong, and the group of prominent Federalists. And one gathers that their attitude was not dictated merely by the clergy's position as patrons of the laboring class. They remained the Bishop's friends throughout his rule here, because they were impressed by his splendid and admirable personality. Among these non-Catholics one of the Bishop's best friends was Josiah Quincy, the well-known leader of the Federalist Party in this State. That acquaintance and friendship began, it is said, with a characteristic incident.

One day near the beginning of the century [the statesman] was driving from Quincy to Boston in a pelting storm . . . [and] overtook a forlorn foot-passenger who, drenched and draggled, was plodding along the miry road. [Mr. Quincy] drew up the

<sup>4</sup>Father Lariscy to Bishop Cheverus, June 24, 1821 (*Boston Dioc. Arch.*); Father Taylor to Archbishop Plessis, July 21, 1824 (*Quebec Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>5</sup>Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, Feb. 14, 1812 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

horse and called to the stranger to get in and ride with him. "That would be scarcely fair," was the man's reply, "my clothes are soaked with water and would spoil the cushions of your chaise, to say nothing of the wetting I could not avoid giving you." These objections were made light of, and after some difficulty, the wayfarer was persuaded to take the offered seat. During the ride [Mr. Quincy] learned that his companion was a priest, named Cheverus, who was walking from Hingham, whither he had been to perform some office connected with his profession, and thus commenced the acquaintance which afterwards ripened into friendship between [them] whose beliefs and ways of life were outwardly so different.<sup>6</sup>

It may have been through Josiah Quincy that Father Cheverus was made acquainted with some of the latter's friends, such as William Tudor, Jonathan Mason, Harrison Gray Otis, and Gardiner Greene, of whom the last-mentioned was the wealthiest Bostonian of his time.<sup>7</sup>

And it may have been through Quincy that Father Cheverus came into relations with the famous literary group, called the Anthology Club. This group of Bostonians, interested in things literary and cultural, met regularly in their headquarters in Franklin Street. Among them, besides Josiah Quincy, were W. T. Shaw, Theodore Lyman, H. G. Otis, John Lowell, and Richard Derby. It has been said that Father Cheverus, whose residence was close by and whose tastes were similar to theirs, frequently met with them. He also, it is believed, was the contributor of the Club's valuable French pamphlets.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, that close and friendly association with the Anthology Club did not prevent Father Cheverus from contributing to the Club's magazine a defense of the Catholic religion against the charges made by a club member. It will be recalled with what courtesy the exchange of views was handled on both sides, and with what respect to the Boston Catholic clergy Mr. Lowell worded his rejoinder.

<sup>6</sup> J. Quincy, *Figures of the Past* (Boston, 1883), pp. 311 f.

<sup>7</sup> See Bishop Cheverus to J. Quincy, April 8, 1826; see also Bishop Cheverus to Gardiner Greene, April 8, 1826 (copies in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>8</sup> Hurtubis, "Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus," in *Bostonian Soc. Pub.*, II (1905), 46. The Club's library was incorporated in 1807 as The Boston Athenaeum.

Friendly relations with the group must have been maintained through the years, for the Bishop made many gifts of books to the Athenaeum Library. The first of these was dated September 26, 1818, shortly after Father Matignon's death. Two others, dated November 14, 1818, and January 1, 1819, brought the number of the books presented thus to a total of forty-seven. They came mostly if not entirely from Father Matignon's library. The Bishop also made another donation of books October 7, 1821. All these, added to the fifty-two which he gave at the time he himself left Boston (September, 1823), made him the second largest contributor to that institution in its first years. He was surpassed in that regard only by John Lowell, who gave one hundred and six volumes.<sup>9</sup>

The continued friendly relationship of the Catholic clergy with this group, while in itself very easy to understand, was peculiarly remarkable in view of the Federalist Party's policy regarding immigrants, of which most of the Catholic congregation was composed. The latter were generally on the Jeffersonian side in politics, and particularly in the war with England and its antecedents. It was Federalists who ruled this section up to the end of that war, and who had called the Hartford Convention, to propose, among other matters, an amendment to the Federal Constitution barring immigrants from official positions in the Federal Government. There can be no doubt that economic reasons were not the only incentives to that action: an anti-Irish feeling was also a powerful motive.

At some period before September, 1818, a certain lawyer and literary writer, named Samuel Knapp, became a friend of the two Boston priests. He wrote the now well-known obituary on Father Matignon in October, 1818, and also, as will be seen, a defense of the Catholics against *The Panoplist* in April, 1819; a plea to the Legislature for full political freedom for Catholics in February, 1820; as well as a famous memoir of Bishop Cheverus in June, 1825, and a very complimentary article on the Boston Ursuline nuns in the same year. In all these writ-

<sup>9</sup> *The Athenaeum Centenary* . . . (Boston, 1907), pp. 75 ff. List of books given by Bishop Cheverus, obtained at the Athenaeum Library.

ings, his special sympathy with Catholic ideas and ideals was no less marked than his outstanding admiration of Father Matignon and the Bishop, and his close personal connection with them. For his Catholic literary endeavors the Boston church leaders were his source if not his direct inspiration. Much softening of prejudice against Catholics must have come from the fruits of his pen.<sup>10</sup>

The Bishop also counted among his non-Catholic friends the celebrated physicians, Drs. Parkman and Warren. Undoubtedly their relations began with some act of charity, but they did not stop there, at least in Dr. Parkman's case, as the following letter will show:

Dear Sir:

Your goodness encourages me to send to you two worthy but poor women living in Charlestown, who have Children to be inoculated. Your charity to them will be the more acceptable, as they are not entitled to the privilege of the inhabitants of Boston.

I would be very happy to join your party tomorrow, but I am under sailing orders, and cannot dispose of a moment.

Your grateful & respectful Servt

† John Cheverus.<sup>11</sup>

It was undoubtedly due to his being a Boston clergyman that Bishop Cheverus was an invited guest at many functions. For example, he was twice in the company of President Monroe during the latter's short stay in Boston in 1817.<sup>12</sup> The

<sup>10</sup> In this connection it should not escape notice that some time before August 31, 1825, Father Taylor suggested to Rev. V. Barber "that it would be good policy if the degree of LL.D. could be procured from some Catholic College for Samuel L. Knapp, a very respectable lawyer in Boston and editor of the *Boston Monthly Magazine*. This gentleman is very friendly to the Catholic cause, as well as an intimate friend to Bishop Cheverus and all the Catholic Clergy in Boston for some time past." When Father Barber wrote that to Father Benjamin Fenwick, he added his own suggestion that Georgetown do this and also at the same time give a D.D. to Father Taylor. Father Barber to Father Fenwick, Aug. 31, 1825 (*Fordham Arch.*, 207 P 18).

<sup>11</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Dr. Parkman, June 27, 1816 (*Bostonian Society Archives*); cf. also Bishop Cheverus to Dr. Parkman, Aug. 11, 1819, *Boston Dioc. Arch.*; to Mme. Bonneuil, July 2, 1815; to Bonneuil, July 18, 1815, and Aug. 30, 1817.

<sup>12</sup> Father Matignon to Bishop Plessis, July 23, 1817.



point about this is that the Bishop used these opportunities in such a way as to acquire an increasingly large place in the town's estimation. This fact is well illustrated in his relations with the Charitable Irish Society. Available records show that this organization invited both Fathers Matignon and Cheverus to their annual banquet in the year 1806. At that date the non-Catholic element was still in charge of the society's affairs and would continue to be so for several years still. In 1810, both Catholic priests were again invited, Bishop Cheverus being given his full title. From 1814 onward, the invitation apparently became an annual affair. In 1817, Bishop Cheverus gave the customary St. Patrick's Day address to the society. In that same year also and in later years, the Cathedral collection taken up on St. Patrick's Day was given to the society. On two of these occasions these collections amounted to thirty-six dollars and forty-three dollars respectively.<sup>13</sup>

From the beginning of their career in Boston, the two priests also had cordial relations with some of the important ministers of the town. One illustration of this in the later years is found in the letters of introduction which they gave to some of them for their travels. An early example of this is the letter given in 1815 by Bishop Cheverus to the famous orator and statesman, Edward Everett. Before that time Everett had served for a short time in the Brattle Square Church and then turned to the teaching of Greek at Harvard. When he went abroad to study, he received from the Bishop a very cordial letter of introduction to professors of the University of Paris and to the members of the Bishop's own family and other relatives.<sup>14</sup> Mention may also be made of a letter given to the Rev. Mr. Pierce, of Brookline, when the latter visited Canada in January, 1817. It was of such content that, as the minister declared, "being introduced in Montreal as the friend of Dr. Matignon gave me a most welcome reception."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *The Constitution and By-Laws of the Charitable Irish Society of Boston . . . with . . . extracts from the . . . records* (Boston, 1876), pp. 35 ff.; *Account Book of Holy Cross Cathedral*; see also J. Buckingham, *Annals of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association* (Boston, 1853), p. 181.

<sup>14</sup> April 14, 1815, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*

<sup>15</sup> *Memoirs*, ms. in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*

With Dr. Pierce and the Rev. Messrs. Thomas Gray, of Jamaica Plain, and Thaddeus M. Harris, of Dorchester, formerly librarian at Harvard, the Catholic Bishop stood on terms which he later described as "continued and mutual friendship and esteem."<sup>16</sup> His intimacy with the Rev. Charles Lowell was evidenced by the affectionate adieu with which they parted in 1823, and by an article which Mr. Lowell wrote about the Bishop after the latter's death.<sup>17</sup> The Bishop was also on terms of the closest intimacy with the Rev. James Freeman, the minister of King's Chapel.<sup>18</sup>

Already by the year 1812, Bishop Cheverus' personality and viewpoint were so appreciated by a group of Unitarian ministers that he was invited to attend a meeting sponsored by them to organize the Seamen's Aid Society. The initiator of this society, the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, a Unitarian minister in Chelsea, had been planning it during the winter of 1811-1812, and on May 11, 1812, the first meeting assembled.<sup>19</sup> Besides several laymen, there were present at it such prominent Boston Unitarian ministers as the Rev. Messrs. Channing, Lowell, Buckminster, and Holley, and — Bishop Cheverus. One of the laymen present, when recalling this fact in after years, spoke of the Bishop's "slight form and humble yet dignified countenance" and of the "powerful influence of his Christian humility . . . in breaking down the prejudices of the sturdy descendants of the Puritans against the Popish name." Nor was that the only meeting in which Bishop Cheverus joined with Protestant clergymen, "with one heart and one mind, devising means of doing good."<sup>20</sup> The active work of that society ended in 1817. Bishop Cheverus had not gone along entirely with its directors. They were mostly Unitarians, with whose dogma he could not agree, however much he joined in their practice of Christian ethics.

<sup>16</sup> *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc., Records*, XVIII (1907), 64.

<sup>17</sup> Letter to editor of *The Christian Register*, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Arch.*

<sup>18</sup> Henry Wilder Foote, *Annals of King's Chapel* (Boston, 1896), II, 395 and 625.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel T. McColgan, *Joseph Tuckerman, Pioneer in American Social Work* (Washington, D.C., 1940), pp. 36-37; *Columbian Centinel*, May 9, 13, 1812.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew P. Peabody, *A Memorial of John W. Foster* (Portsmouth, 1852), pp. 207-238 (Foster's Lectures on Cheverus).

It was with Unitarians that he had most of his success in conciliation. In the year 1815, the long-concealed conflict between them and the orthodox Congregationalists broke out into the open. The orthodox side was represented by a well-known Charlestown minister, Mr. Jedediah Morse, who made a lengthy and bitter attack on the so-called "American Unitarianism." This he published in his magazine, *The Panoplist*.<sup>21</sup> The ensuing controversy was bitter while it lasted, leading to both an openly defined issue in dogma and a cleverly planned strategy in church leadership. By the 1820's the liberals or Unitarians were victorious in the latter issue, but the struggle had brought much confusion into Protestant ranks.

Bishop Cheverus could nowise rejoice in the Unitarian denial of Our Lord's divinity, nor could he, on the other side, be blind to the anti-Catholic bigotry of the orthodox. Nevertheless, it was chiefly from the Unitarian side that Catholics had been favored: and it was among Unitarians that the Bishop had most of his non-Catholic friends and defenders. In everything, except the essentials of the faith, he clearly leaned toward the Unitarians.

Writing to a friend about this movement on one occasion Bishop Cheverus said:

One of our Congregationalist ministers, speaking from the pulpit last Sunday, declared that the doctrine of the Trinity would soon be as completely rejected as is that of the Salem Witchcraft. He was Mr. Horace Holley: and at least spoke his mind clearly. He is a talented and amiable man. But what is religion coming to, when such blasphemies are boldly preached and quietly received by a large congregation! You will note that The Layman also is quite unrestrained. He is a lawyer, Mr. John Lowell, brother of a minister, a member of one of our first families and of the Corporation of the University of Cambridge.<sup>22</sup>

Some few years later he wrote to the same friend: "Nothing has appeared here on Unitarianism, except the reply to Mr.

<sup>21</sup> Vol. XI (1815), no. 6 — June.

<sup>22</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Father Bruté, March 23, 1816 (*Notre Dame Arch.*).

Channing of Professor Stuart, which you have doubtless already read.”<sup>23</sup>

One may be certain that during these years the Bishop paid particular attention in his sermons to preach the divinity of Our Lord. This was especially the case at Christmas time, when, on one occasion, he wrote to the same priest friend, “Despite the Socinians, the Word . . . has and *will* come to take up his dwelling among us.”<sup>24</sup>

It was Harvard’s Unitarianism particularly which made the Boston prelate and Father Matignon so averse to having Catholic boys go to that college, and made them so concerned for their faith if they did go there. In June, 1816, there was question of the Canadian Father Govin’s sending to the college two sons of some friend of his. It was decided to send them to Emmitsburg instead, for “although [here] they would have had better opportunity to learn English, they would have forgotten their religion, etc., etc.”<sup>25</sup> Several Catholic boys from the South were, however, sent to Harvard by their parents. For each of them Bishop Cheverus expressed a similar fear about their faith. Not that religion was the only thing he had to lament in their case—the boys abused the Bishop’s kindness to them. In regard to one, he wrote:

I would like to write to the father of young . . . but I don’t know what to tell him. I have not seen his son since July 2, when he came to borrow \$10 from me: he told me that he was expecting money from home. I am his guarantor to the University for \$400, and if I have to make any advances at the moment, I shall be much embarrassed. This poor young man never comes to church, etc. I do not know if he will acquire any other knowledge, but I very much fear that he will lose, or has already lost, the knowledge of his salvation. I always received him and treated him with the greatest kindness.<sup>26</sup>

In after years, one of these Harvard boys wrote a review of

<sup>23</sup> Same to same, Jan. 5, 1820 (*ibid.*).

<sup>24</sup> Same to same, Dec. 19, 1820 (*ibid.*).

<sup>25</sup> Same to same, June 25, 1816 (*ibid.*).

<sup>26</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 1, 1820; cf. also same to same, Dec. 6, 1820; Dec. 10, 1819; March 26, 1821.



the Hamon life of Bishop Cheverus, from which it appears that whatever may have been the religious outcome, he had been deeply impressed in a personal way by the Boston prelate.<sup>27</sup>

But while the Unitarians departed always more from Catholic doctrines, the so-called orthodox Congregationalists, and the Evangelical Protestants in general, manifesting their reaction against the rationalism of the late eighteenth century, renewed and developed sharp attacks against the Church. By 1819, their anti-Catholic campaign had become virulent. In June of that year, the *Christian Watchman* pointed out the need of constant labor to prevent the world from returning to the "moral night" of "Popery," which it had known before the Reformation.<sup>28</sup> *The Panoplist* had already engaged in that labor in March. At that time it took occasion of Father Lariscy's ministrations to the condemned pirates in early 1819 to protest that "no clergymen, except those of the Roman Catholic religion, were permitted to visit the prisoners." The article then continued with an ill-restrained outburst against the Catholic Church. It declared that this Church "contains the most monstrous mass of anti-Christian error, that she is the grand corrupter of the true religion . . . that the common people are forbidden the use of the Bible, that the great body of the clergy in Catholic countries are grossly ignorant . . ." and so on and so forth.

This outspoken example of revived anti-Catholic bigotry was hardly off the press when Samuel Knapp made preparations to answer it. His reply appeared in *The Gazette* of April 22nd. Almost at the beginning he took *The Panoplist* writer to task for falsehood and for wanton assault on Catholic learning, and delivered a special encomium of Bishop Cheverus, together with a brilliant exposition of Father Lariscy's part in the whole affair. In conclusion, he wrote, "We are not advocates for any particular church or confession of faith, but for religious free-

<sup>27</sup> *U.S. Cath. Miscel.*, XXII (1842), 70, Sept. 3, 1842.

<sup>28</sup> Referred to in R. A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade* (New York, 1938), p. 44. See references also on p. 51, n. 54.

dom, believing that those who walk humbly, do justly, and love mercy, will be accepted of God.”<sup>29</sup>

That conclusion was the Unitarian creed, in accord with which Unitarian Boston had changed its former anti-Catholic spirit. All the four Dudleian lecturers who treated the “Popery” subject from 1809 onward declared, in one fashion or other, that times had changed, that the Catholic Church had changed, or that viewpoints had changed; in fine, that there was little, if any, place for the old style of opposition to “Popery.” The first of these four began his discourse with the words: “It may be suggested that our subject is now obsolete.” In a later part of his lecture, he said that the “general state of things and those particular feelings which dictated the subject of the present lecture have, in a degree, passed away and the dubious apprehensions of its founder may not have been fulfilled,” and that Rome has been “dispossessed of the evil spirit of religious tyranny.”<sup>30</sup>

The lecturer for 1813, President Kirkland, of Harvard University, declared:

We may therefore naturally abate much of that abhorrence of papists which our fathers felt themselves obliged to maintain and inculcate . . . nay . . . I imagine it may be thought lawful for us to believe in the compatibility of the Romish faith with a capacity of salvation; and we may be allowed . . . to admit the possible, nay more, the presumptive, Christianity of a virtuous and devout Roman Catholic. . . . [President Kirkland went on to an even more astounding assertion.] I do not at present think that the Dudleian lecturer is obliged to maintain that the Pope is anti-Christ.<sup>31</sup>

The lecture for 1817 had the startling title “The Errours of Popery and Protestantism.” It was given by the Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, of Lancaster, cousin to the famous Father John Thayer. In one part of his discourse he declared:

<sup>29</sup> The article, although signed C. D. E., Cambridge, was written by Knapp: cf. Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819.

<sup>30</sup> *Dudleian Lecture*, by Rev. John Allyn, minister of Duxborough, May 10, 1809.

<sup>31</sup> *Dudleian Lecture*, by Rev. Dr. Kirkland, May 12, 1813.

Both the Reformed and Papal Churches have groaned under a burden of absurd theories, unprofitable forms, superstitious observances, visionary terrors and delusive hopes. It would be an unjust accusation of the Church of Rome to say that she *alone* had used extravagant or anti-christian methods in propagating religion [and so on].<sup>32</sup>

The theme of the Rev. John Pierce, of Brookline, who gave the 1821 Lecture, was particularized in an encomium of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus:

We rejoice that, notwithstanding what has now been frankly suggested respecting the faith of the Romish Church, we can retain undiminished affection for its regular and consistent professors and advocates; and that, of this denomination, there are and have been instances of those, in whose friendship we have felt ever-increasing delight, whose talents we profoundly respect, and whose virtue, fidelity, zeal and other accomplishments we can unhesitatingly recommend to the imitation of every preacher, who would covet earnestly the best of gifts.<sup>33</sup>

The lecturers did not omit, of course, their opposition to Auricular Confession, Transubstantiation, Cult of the Saints, and Papal Infallibility, but even these old-time stumbling-blocks were treated with less vituperation.

Nevertheless, by 1825, the former bitterness began again to be manifested. The Rev. William Jenks, lecturer for that year, while reflecting the change that had come about in the previous half generation, still showed himself a true heir of the past. Expressing his fear of the advance of Rome in these United States, with its increasing number of bishops, priests, and adherents, he revived the almost vanished mode of appeal to the Apocalyptic testimony. His introduction, however, was itself a sign that tolerance was not yet ended. The gist of his lecture may be found in these words:

Duty impelled him to this unpleasant office. . . .

The times have changed since the foundation of this quadrennial service. . . .

<sup>32</sup> May 14, 1817.

<sup>33</sup> *Dudleian Lecture, on The Right of Private Judgment*, by Rev. John Pierce, minister of Brookline, at Cambridge, Oct. 24, 1821, p. 23.

But notwithstanding these concessions and the apology which the lecturer on this occasion is willing to offer, he must be permitted to regard as an unjustifiable extension of what is termed liberality, . . . the disposition to view the errors of Rome as unimportant and trivial and to miscall the opposition to them a fondness for polemical theology and bigotted attachment to creeds.<sup>34</sup>

### III

At this same period the more influential part of the non-Catholic community gave a remarkable instance of their changed attitude by granting Catholics full political freedom by constitutional right. This grant was made first in Maine and later in Massachusetts.

In 1819, the District of Maine voted to separate from Massachusetts and become a distinct State. In changing its condition this new member of the Federal Union made a new constitution, which, unlike that of its parent State, contained no bar of any kind against Catholics.<sup>35</sup> In regard to that constitution an interesting story has become traditional. It runs thus: The delegates' method was to adopt, change, or omit, one by one, the clauses of the Massachusetts Constitution, which they used as a draft. On a certain day they adopted the old clause of the Massachusetts Constitution denying to Catholics the right to hold office. On the next day the Chairman of the Convention found on his desk a sealed envelope containing an argument against the discriminating clause. No name was signed to it, but so strong was the argument that when the Chairman read it to the Convention, the anti-Catholic article was reconsidered and stricken out by a unanimous vote. The author of the anonymous letter was later discovered to be Edward Kavanagh,

<sup>34</sup> *Dudleian Lecture*, by William Jenks, A.M., *The Grand Apostasy and Anti-Christian Influence of Papal Rome*, May 11, 1825.

<sup>35</sup> The Governor's proclamation for a constitutional convention was issued Aug. 24, 1819; the convention, presided over by John Holmes, began Oct. 11th, and adjourned Oct. 29th. On the first Wednesday of January, 1820, proclamation was made that the voters had ratified the new constitution. Maine solemnly began its statehood on March 15, 1820 (Williamson, *Maine*, II, 673 ff.).



the original manuscript having been found among his papers. It was in Kavanagh's handwriting and was endorsed on the back by Bishop Fenwick.<sup>36</sup>

This story contains some errors. For example, the name of the bishop who endorsed the document was certainly not Fenwick, but Cheverus. Besides, the supposedly anonymous character of the petition is incorrect: the actual petition which is extant shows the names of James Kavanagh, Matthew Cottrill, and William Mooney.<sup>37</sup> The story is also probably incorrect in attributing the authorship of the petition to Edward Kavanagh, then only twenty-four years old. For there is in the document the unmistakable sign of Bishop Cheverus' hand. The probability is that the document was sent by the Bishop to Edward Kavanagh for copying and then for presentation to the Convention.<sup>37</sup> Pointing out the objections which Catholics had to the form of anti-Papal oath then in use in Massachusetts, the petition made the proper distinction between the Pope's spiritual and temporal jurisdiction, and also the factual refutation of false prejudices against Catholics.

If the Catholic demean himself as a peaceful citizen, if in his religious worship, he does not disturb the public peace or introduce indecencies or immoralities, tending to the subversion of civil society, if he take up arms and march to the field of battle in defense of the sepulchres of *our* forefathers and in maintenance of the rights, the honor, the liberties and independence of his country, the undersigned are utterly unable to see why he should not enjoy equal privileges and immunities with his fellow citizens.

This fairly long and outspoken, as well as just, presentation of the Catholic case against the oath was successful.

There are good reasons to connect this document, which so fully convinced the Maine Convention, with another of similar purpose which appeared in print in Boston shortly afterward. This other document was a plea to the Massachusetts Legisla-

<sup>36</sup> Cited in *Researches*, IX (1892), 158 f.

<sup>37</sup> The petition was printed in the *U.S. Cath. Hist. Mag.*, III (1890), 216 ff. Its original date was Oct. 12, 1819.

ture for full constitutional liberty for Catholics in this State. It was published in February, 1820, by Samuel L. Knapp, the Protestant friend of Father Matignon and Bishop Cheverus. That this article was written in close association with Bishop Cheverus seems undeniable, as is also the part it later played in securing a constitutional freedom for Catholics in Massachusetts, similar to that in Maine. The article asserted that the Catholics, growing daily in numbers and importance, felt their wrongs more sensibly than ever before. In the past they had patiently waited for redress, confiding in the certain progress of more enlightened views on the part of their fellow citizens, and studying themselves by their mild and submissive conduct rather to approve themselves good citizens than by a bold avowal of their claims to reawaken long-subsided jealousies and animosities. But the time was now come to have justice done, and to perfect the work of religious freedom in this Commonwealth.

The Protestant author of the article asserted:

In this way only can we Protestants deserve the Catholics' forgiveness for former unkindness . . . and wipe from our State character a deep and dishonorable stain. [The article then denied the propriety, the policy, and the justice of the former test oath.] This test does not effect the object for which it was intended . . . It is a species of persecution . . . It is absurd, in view of the Federal Constitution . . . It is adverse to the interest of the community. [In conclusion, the article threw all its broadsides into the point:] It is not easy to imagine what fair objections can be made to the tenet of the Catholic Church, which requires its priests to correspond with a venerable Prelate in another country, and to be subject to his admonitions and government in concerns strictly spiritual, and entirely disengaged from civil affairs. Catholics disclaim any temporal authority of the Pope, or any body of men in the Church of Rome, and declare that they, nor either of them, have any civil authority, civil jurisdiction, or civil pre-eminence whatsoever, in any kingdom or country . . . that neither the Pope, nor any body of men of the Church of Rome can absolve or release the subjects or citizens of any State from their oath of allegiance, that there is no tenet in the Catholic Church by

which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with those of other denominations, or those who differ from them in matters of religion . . . and they complain most heavily of the malice and calumny of their adversaries in imputing this doctrine to them. If the opposers of the Catholics were in truth persuaded, that a dispensation from the oath of allegiance could easily be procured, why should they strenuously insist on any oath, which they believe could be broken with little reluctance? All these tests are equally vain and fruitless, whether the truth be with the Catholics or not — and in the words of Lord Mansfield, “Conscience is not controulable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals. Persecution, or attempts to force conscience, will never produce conviction, and are only calculated to make either hypocrites or martyrs.”

[Signed] A PROTESTANT,<sup>38</sup>

This article appeared in *The Palladium* on February 18th and 22nd. It is relevant to notice that in March, 1820, an item in Bishop Cheverus' *Account Book* reads, “Printing memorial to the Legislature, \$12.”

At the time when Knapp's plea to the Legislature was presented, that body was considering the matter of calling a convention to revise the State Constitution. In the spring session it passed an act submitting the matter to the voters and setting the date August 16th for this referendum. Shortly before the voting date, the *Columbian Centinel* carried an eloquent article on the need of establishing real religious freedom in the State. The article, signed “B. G.,” was very favorable to Catholics. It read in part:

But let us ponder on the fact that at present no Catholic, if he have all the talents and virtues, is capable of holding any office in this Commonwealth; and that, for half a century, a Catholic Priest was condemned to the same fate with wolves, if twice apprehended within the limits of Massachusetts. It is most disgraceful to us, that when Catholics are numerous in several parts of the country, when some of them are among the most able and admired citizens of the Union, when our own capital embraces men of that persuasion of the most irreproach-

<sup>38</sup> From *The Palladium*, Feb. 18, 22, 1820.

able virtue and patriotism, we should obstinately persist in excluding them from rights which the meanest and vilest and worst of all other persuasions enjoy. . . .<sup>39</sup>

This article likewise referred to the eloquent communication that had been published in *The Palladium* in February.

The people voted in favor of holding the Convention, and they also held elections to choose delegates for it. In Boston, forty-five delegates were to be elected, and when the votes had been counted, it was seen that 855 votes were necessary for a choice. The Rt. Rev. John Cheverus received 410 votes, and was therefore not elected: however, he stood well up on the list. Rev. Charles Lowell, for example, received only eight votes; Rev. William E. Channing received but three.<sup>40</sup> In the circumstances, the vote for Bishop Cheverus was a handsome compliment.

On November 15, 1820, the long anticipated convention assembled at the State House<sup>41</sup> and on November 29th, the Committee on Oaths submitted the resolution of rewording the text of the usual oaths of abjuration and office. The suggested new text of the former made no mention of *foreign prelate* or *spiritual jurisdiction*, and thus provided the satisfaction desired by Catholics.

In regard to the point at issue there has come to light what must be regarded as an illuminating incident. On November 30, 1820, Bishop Cheverus received from some important person, evidently a member of the Convention, a communication the answer to which explains its origin as well as the Bishop's attitude:

Boston, Dec. 1, 1820.

Honoured and dear Sir,

On my return from Rhode Island last night, I found your kind note sent in the morning. I hope it is not too late to answer it.

<sup>39</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Aug. 9, 1820.

<sup>40</sup> Oct. 16, 1820, *Report, Record Commission*, XXXVII, 160-162.

<sup>41</sup> What is practically the official account of this convention is contained in *Journal of Debates and Proceedings*, etc. (1st. ed.: Boston, 1821; rev. ed.: Boston, 1853).



The oath of office (by which every *spiritual* jurisdiction of any foreign Prelate is disclaimed) is the only thing to which we object in the Constitution. I send you an address to the legislature published in *The Palladium* at the end of the last session which sets the matter in a clear light. I could send more copies, if they were wanted.

The writer [of that address] is really a Protestant, a gentleman of the law. . . .<sup>42</sup>

In regard to the oath of abjuration, the Convention was apparently quite willing to accept the Committee's recommendation: little if any opposition to it was manifested, and the change was accepted by the Convention. The popular vote was 17,552 for dropping the old oath, to 9244 for retaining it.<sup>43</sup>

As regards the test oath, however, much discussion developed. The old oath had nowise affected Catholics; demanding profession of belief in Christianity in general, it served to exclude only non-Christians. The Committee suggested the entire omission of any religious qualification. Fairly warm debate ensued. Opponents of the change mentioned the danger that it might be construed as an official, although indirect, abandonment of Christianity. They noted that as the previous oath involved no sectarianism, and could be taken by any person who believed in the great principles of the Christian religion, it shut out only those who, they felt, should be shut out, namely Jews, Mohammedans, and Deists. Those in favor of dropping the test oath declared that no religious test ought to exist in any constitution; that none existed in the Constitution of the United States, that tests did not exclude evil men from office. History had shown, they declared, that

the offer of a sceptre had induced princes to cross themselves, or to throw off allegiance to the pope, just as suited their views of aggrandizement. . . . The test act in Britain was a blot on their statute book . . . intended to operate against the papists, but found to apply equally to protestant dissenters. . . .<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Library, American Unitarian Association.*

<sup>43</sup> *Journal*, pp. 630, 633. Compare with this account the treatment given by Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, p. 76.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 160 ff.; cf. also in *Journal's Index* under "Tests."

The liberals won, and the test oath also was excluded by the Convention. In the popular vote, however, the Convention's action was ratified by but a bare majority. The vote was 13,782 to 12,480.<sup>45</sup>

The religious factor entered the Convention, not only on the matter of the oaths, but also on that of the Declaration of Rights. Here the debate was long and heated. The Committee reported that it found itself generally in agreement on "the great privilege [*sic!*] of religious freedom and [on] the support of public worship and public religious institutions . . ." but it found "no small difficulty in settling the mode" of combining both. The Committee wished to solve the difficulty by putting all religious societies, "incorporated and unincorporated" on an equal basis before the law. Although the Convention voted in favor of the liberal side, the people of the State refused to ratify the change.<sup>46</sup>

So the Convention of 1820 did not finally effect any change in the Declaration of Rights. "Public teachers of religion" in the Constitution were still to be "Protestant." Catholics residing outside Boston, Newburyport, and Salem could still be obliged to pay ministerial taxes for the support of Congregational ministers if the Legislature so determined. On the other hand, Catholics in Massachusetts, as well as those in Maine, were no longer constitutionally barred from accepting any elective office in their respective States.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 633.

<sup>46</sup> *Journal*, pp. 558 ff.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DEPARTURE OF BISHOP CHEVERUS AND THE INTERREGNUM (1823-1825)

THESE SAME YEARS of growth in numbers and prestige also brought nearer the end of Bishop Cheverus' labors here. The end came in October, 1823, when he left Boston to accept a see in France offered him by the French King; but his departure was not the result of a sudden decision made in obedience to the French King's call. Although in the end it was occasioned by this offer, it had been brought about by many causes and reached back several years. In general, it may be said to have dated from Father Matignon's death.

The Bishop was literally stunned by that loss: and the blow affected his health as well as his heart. During the whole autumn and winter thereafter, he was in an alarming condition, mentally and physically. While planning the cemetery for his venerable friend, he wrote to the Archbishop that Father Matignon's "tomb will be reopened only to receive my own body, and that perhaps soon. . . . In case of my death," he went on, "please accept my rochet and \$500 for the expenses of the priest whom you will send here and whom I now name administrator. . . ." <sup>1</sup> On November 14, 1818, he wrote in the same strain to his family: "My best and best-loved friend is taken from me and a union of twenty-two years' standing is dissolved. But that will, I hope, be only for a time: the same tomb will, perhaps soon, enclose both our mortal remains. May the good Lord deign, despite my unworthiness, to reunite my poor soul to his in heaven." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Oct. 7, 1818.

*Note:* There was a suggestion made by Archbishop Maréchal that Rome might consent, at the Archbishop's request, to transfer Bishop Cheverus to some see nearer to Maréchal. The Bishop replied, "I shall never consent to a translation. My intention is to live here and to die here" (*ibid.*). See also Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, Oct. 9, 1818.

<sup>2</sup> To Mme. Le Febvre de Cheverus, Nov. 14, 1818.

During that winter his heavy burden of sorrow was doubled by bodily infirmity. In his depressed condition he caught a bad cold, which added its toll to that of a similar affliction suffered in the Southern trip of two years before. In addition thereto he began to be even more deeply affected by a third factor. A growing discouragement about the conditions and the outlook in the American Church sorely afflicted him. He feared that an unjustified national and racial bitterness would stunt the growth of this nascent establishment, and that renewed misunderstandings between its two foremost religious institutes, the Jesuits and the Sulpicians, would sap its strength. He also saw himself and the Archbishop unable to deal effectively with the increasing disorder, calumniated as they were and plotted against here and abroad and, worst of all, apparently abandoned by Rome.

These diverse physical and mental concerns finally engendered in the Bishop's mind a determination to retire from the active leadership of the Diocese and to spend in retirement here or at home what he was convinced would be his few remaining years of life. His delicately balanced nature did not make positive decisions easily, and in this case there was much to be weighed on the other side. His flock was devoted to him, the non-Catholics of Boston trusted and admired him, and he himself rejoiced in both. Furthermore, he was rightly convinced that both classes needed him. Thus, the execution of his resolution was delayed.

In the spring of 1819, a doctor whom his friends made him consult said that as yet the lungs were not involved.<sup>3</sup> From then on, the matter of health became less serious: it remained, however, a point of constant comment in his letters. There is, for example, reference in August of 1820 to "a trembling of the hand which often prevented [his] writing,"<sup>4</sup> and in the spring of 1821, to the dry cough and the catarrh which were his constant companions. There is also talk of the necessity of

<sup>3</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819. See also Bishop Cheverus to his brother, March 13, 1819, and to Bonneuil, March 21, 1819.

<sup>4</sup> To Mrs. Seton, Aug. 22, 1820.



taking rest and vacation: but there is little sign of critical illness.<sup>5</sup>

## I

Other affairs of great import for the American Church itself began to engross his attention and his energies. The first of these touched certain controversies that had arisen between the Archbishop of Baltimore and the Jesuit Fathers concerning finances and jurisdiction. Archbishop Maréchal's two predecessors had constantly received from the Corporation of the (Jesuit) Clergy of Maryland an annuity of about twelve hundred dollars. Up to June, 1818, the new Archbishop had received nothing from them, and wrote them as to their intentions on the matter.<sup>6</sup> In reply, thereto, the Corporation voted him a sum of five hundred and sixty dollars per year for three years, and actually did pay him one hundred dollars on July 16, 1818, "as part salary." But it denied any obligation on its part in this matter and emphasized that its proffered subsidy was a strictly gratuitous donation. Therewith the issue was drawn. Bishop Cheverus was brought into the affair by the Archbishop's request for his opinion and advice. He replied in characteristic fashion:

Since you do me the honor of asking my advice on the matter of the clergy in Maryland, I will say that I think as you do. Tell them that you regard the establishment of the See of Baltimore as obliging them to do for you and your successors what they did for your two predecessors, and that you cannot therefore renounce this and are obliged to protest against their refusal; but that after having fulfilled this duty, you leave the rest to their conscience and will stay poor without murmur or resentment.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Dec. 27, 1819, to Bonneuil: the Bishop's health is better: he scarcely coughs at all; people tell him that he looks well: Christmas did not fatigue him extremely.

<sup>6</sup>Archbishop Maréchal to the Trustees, June, 1818. Hughes, *History of the Society of Jesus in the U.S.* (New York, 1810), *Documents*, I, part II, 891.

<sup>7</sup>To Archbishop Maréchal, July 15, 1818.

The difference between the Archbishop and the Jesuits became always more heated, and finally took on the form of a suit, brought by the former, to the Court of Rome.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the Boston prelate had clearly dreaded a break. His desire to prevent it was evident, for example, when he congratulated the Archbishop on a mark of homage to the Society, shown by inviting Father Kohlmann to bestow the pallium on him. He also did what he could to aid in relieving the Archbishop's financial need. In the summer of 1820, when he went to Montreal to accompany the Ursulines back to Boston, he took advantage of his visit to seek aid for Archbishop Maréchal from the Montreal Sulpicians.<sup>9</sup> In this he was evidently successful, for some time after his return he wrote to the Archbishop:

I am really ashamed of the gratitude you express in your letter of August 15th. I deserve neither your thanks nor that of the Seminary; I have only been the channel for the benefit of others. I wish the Jesuits were also as well disposed in your regard [as the Sulpicians].

There is little further mention of the point in the Cheverus-Maréchal correspondence, although that little has its importance in understanding the Boston prelate's interests on the eve of his departure from America. It was gradually fused with the other difficulties of the American Church.

In the spring of 1821, the Bishop's bad state of health, especially since Easter, had made him form a plan of vacation, which the doctor and all his friends told him was absolutely necessary. He wrote about it to the Archbishop, expressing his desire to visit him and also to be present at the dedication of the Baltimore Cathedral.

But [he said] if other Bishops don't go, or are not invited, will they not imagine that there is (as has already been pretended) some Gallican conspiracy? Be so kind as to answer me imme-

<sup>8</sup> Aug. 19, 1820. Hughes, *History of the Society of Jesus in the U.S., Documents*, I, part I, pp. 386 ff. See the index in Hughes.

<sup>9</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Dec. 10, 1819; May 25, Sept. 1, 1820.

diately and tell me what you think. I would like to be back here by the end of June.<sup>10</sup>

He went to Baltimore and was greatly benefited by the change. But he did not return immediately to Boston. Instead, he went on to Montreal and Quebec. The extension of his trip to include Canada was motivated not more by his health than by the desire of obtaining further financial help for the Archbishop of Baltimore, and of smoothing out the difficulties that had arisen between the Montreal Sulpicians and the Archbishop of Quebec.<sup>11</sup> On his return from Canada, he wrote to Archbishop Maréchal, who by this time was intending to go to Rome for his own business and that of the Church of America. "My health is *in statu quo*. . . . I am feeble [*foible*] both in body and spirit. Pray for me and get me a good successor."<sup>12</sup>

The Archbishop then, taking advantage of Bishop Cheverus' continued need of vacation to combine it with his own ecclesiastical needs, asked the Boston prelate to go to Rome in his stead as agent for the Church of America. The latter answered him on the 26th of September with a tentative refusal.

I cannot leave Boston [he wrote] at least until Father Taylor knows more of the Diocese and is more known here. Besides, what good would I be able to accomplish? I am French; they would not trust me, and several of our confrères would write [to Rome] in opposition. I shall write you at greater length next week. What your generosity offers me would be more than sufficient, for I would go by way of France, and my brother would give me help if I needed it.<sup>13</sup>

In the end, Archbishop Maréchal went to Rome himself.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> To same, May 3, 1821. On May 21, 1821, before leaving Boston the Bishop made his will, leaving everything to Archbishop Maréchal, whom he also appointed executor, together with J. P. Cook, Attorney, of Boston (copy in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 22 A E 1).

<sup>11</sup> Father Roux to Archbishop Maréchal, July 4, 1821; Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, July 9, 1821; to Father Tessier, *ca.* July 23, 1821; to Archbishop Maréchal, Aug. 17, 1821; to Archbishop Plessis, Sept. 6, 1821, and Oct. 17, 1821.

<sup>12</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, July 9, 1821. He had been successful in obtaining financial help for Archbishop Maréchal, but he had not seen the Archbishop of Quebec.

<sup>13</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 26, 1821.

<sup>14</sup> Bishop Cheverus went to Montreal again in the summer of 1822 and again he combined his visit with the purpose of aiding Archbishop Maréchal. To Father Tessier, Sept. 24, 1822 (*Baltimore Sem. Arch.*).

It was not only the Jesuit affair that was in question. There was also the growing crisis about the American episcopate which added its share to Bishop Cheverus' mental disquiet and bodily ill health. Part of the troubles of the American episcopate lay in the fact that four of the five bishops were French, and that the only Irish bishop, Monsignor Connolly, of New York, was at odds with them. He did not agree with them either in general policy or in the recommendations for filling vacant sees. In his mind, the French bishops of the United States and the French Bishop of Quebec formed a Gallican conspiracy with anti-Irish prejudices. Even when the French bishops recommended the German Vicar-General De Barth for the vacant see of Philadelphia, Monsignor Connolly did not concur with them. When the French bishops opposed the establishment of a diocese in Virginia, he favored it, and he also recommended for its bishop an Irish priest who was an outspoken enemy of the Archbishop.<sup>15</sup> In addition, when there were troubles in his own diocese, he refused to take the Archbishop as arbiter (December, 1819). In a letter to Propaganda, he set forth his own stand thus:

The mass of Catholics [here] will never believe [that] French Bishops . . . are able to be impartial in affairs in which their national interests are involved. As to my person, I know that Frenchmen in this country do not respect me much. They know me and they know that I will always be opposed to the system to force the Catholics of this country to be satisfied with French, Swiss, German and Italian Bishops, who do not understand sufficiently the national tongue, that is the [one] generally used in this country. They know that I have advocated it many times before the Sacred Congregation. . . .<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Bishop Connolly to Propaganda, Feb. 25, 1818.

<sup>16</sup> March 10, 1820. *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti of 1821, Sommario*. Repetition in substance of letter of Oct. 25 (or Dec. 15), 1819. See *ibid.*, p. 23.

*Note:* John Gilmary Shea, the learned historian of the Church in America, spoke of the New York troubles as "a sad commentary on the introduction of national preferences into the affairs of the Church. Bishop Connolly had been selected to appease the complaints made by unworthy priests and pretentious laymen who had really lost the faith; he had drawn none but priests of his own nationality to his diocese, yet he found himself denounced by his own to his Metropolitan and to the Propaganda, and a fellow countryman aiming to supersede him" (III, 179-180).



Bishop Cheverus' general policy in the matter of American dioceses was that they should be as few as possible, and that their bishops should be chosen from the priests of the diocese, if one was available; otherwise, from priests who were acquainted with the American mission. He also believed that Rome should appoint the person whom the American bishops recommended. In late 1818, when he recognized that Charleston would best be made a separate diocese, he recommended the American Father Benedict Fenwick as its bishop.<sup>17</sup> In December, 1819, when Rome decided to put a bishop there, Bishop Cheverus renewed his recommendation of Father Fenwick.

Since a Bishop has been desired for Charleston [he said], I see no one more fitted for that see than the one who, as you say, is doing marvels there, as he did in New York. . . . It is to be desired, if it could happen, that we should have here at least one Bishop born and brought up in the United States.<sup>18</sup>

Early in 1819, when Father De Barth refused the appointment to Philadelphia, Bishop Cheverus recommended either Father Gallitzin or Father Hurley for that see, one German, the other Irish, but both of them long active on the mission here.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Oct. 28, 1818.

<sup>18</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Dec. 20, 1819. Archbishop Maréchal had recommended establishing a see at Charleston: and Rome decided to set one up. It so informed the Archbishop by letter of Sept. 11, 1819.

<sup>19</sup> Jan. 25, 1819. "In our situation, an outsider finds himself opposed from the start, and perhaps [placed] in the impossibility of doing any good." The French Bishop of New Orleans likewise recommended for Philadelphia "neither a Frenchman nor an Irishman." He named an American, the Jesuit, Father B. Fenwick (Bishop Du Bourg to Propaganda, Feb. 16, 1819).

The French Archbishop himself in Sept., 1819, wrote the Sacred Congregation in the same sense: "I see no other means of remedying the evils [here] than to raise up a national clergy; and it is toward this end I am bending all my efforts. In two or three years, I hope to have a sufficient number of them to supply my [own] diocese. Meanwhile, I shall gladly receive any priests whom Divine Providence may send me, particularly English and Scotch. As for Irish, prudence demands that I receive them only with the greatest caution." The French bishops thus had a policy which was different from Bishop Connolly's. Nevertheless, Bishop Cheverus, opposed as he was to the latter, nowise believed in breaking relations with him. In this regard, he advised the Archbishop: "If I were in your place, I would write to the good Bishop of New York. If they have and manifest prejudices against us, let our only reply be frank and friendly conduct." To Archbishop Maréchal, Jan. 25, 1819.

None of all these nominees of his was French; none was unacquainted with the American mission. He scrupulously avoided any interference in the internal affairs of Bishop Connolly's own diocese. Already in May, 1819, he had "groan[ed] over the events in New York but that," he asserted, "is all I can do." He likewise believed that the Archbishop himself could do nothing else.<sup>20</sup>

When Father Taylor went to Rome early in 1820, as representative of a New York group, to complain of their Bishop, and wrote to Bishop Cheverus, among others, for a letter of recommendation, the Boston prelate sent him a very non-committal reply. Indeed, Bishop Cheverus warned Father Taylor that he "was and desired to remain ignorant of the affairs of New York and could not meddle in them."<sup>21</sup>

Bishop Cheverus was also "afflicted" at what was happening in Norfolk, where a certain Father Carbry had defied the Archbishop and employed the civil power to set himself up as pastor. Bishop Cheverus wrote to the Archbishop: "I have joined my tears and prayers with yours."<sup>22</sup> And when he learned that Rome decided, even against the Archbishop's wish, to set up a bishopric in Virginia, he wrote to the Archbishop this advice:

Father Grassi is going to live in Rome. He would be able to explain things to the good Cardinal [of Propaganda] and show him on the map that Virginia in particular is at your door, especially in view of the facilities for travel. . . . I wish you would send to Rome your pastoral letter and have Father Grassi translate it into Italian or Latin.<sup>23</sup>

In Rome, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda was, as is known, attempting to provide for the ever-increasing number of Irish Catholics in America, and in this matter tended to follow the advice of the Irish rather than of the American hierarchy. For example, early in 1820, it appointed Father Con-

<sup>20</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, May 17, 1819; to Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, Oct. 12, and Dec. 10, 1819.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 26, 1820.

<sup>22</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, July 16, 1819; cf. also same to same, Dec. 10, 1819.

<sup>23</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Dec. 20, 1819.

well, formerly a parish priest in Ireland, to the See of Philadelphia. Thus it seemed to be taking the side of those persons who had given an unfavorable description of the French bishops and clergy in America.<sup>24</sup> On July 8th, Father Taylor, who had already reported to Archbishop Maréchal along this line, sent a message of similar content to the Bishop of Boston. It was to the effect that "some evil spirits" had misrepresented the state of the Catholic religion in America.

They have succeeded [he wrote] in persuading the . . . Sacred Congregation that the French and German missionaries are detested in America; that the French Bishops are tyrannical in the exercise of their jurisdiction and that they have formed a league with the Jesuits to exclude Irish ecclesiastics from the American missions. [Cardinal Somaglia] talked of sending a Bishop to Washington and has actually appointed one to Charleston. The deistical pamphlets of the unprincipled men of Norfolk and Charleston have been more attended to here than the sound pastoral letter of the good Archbishop. . . .<sup>25</sup>

Bishop Cheverus forwarded Father Taylor's letter to the Archbishop, with the comment:

The enclosed will sadden and surprise you, as it did me. . . . It is most afflicting that without consulting you, they divide your diocese and put at your door a Bishop who will rehabilitate the unfortunate priest whom you have so justly suspended. . . . Oremus pro invicem et pro Ecclesia Americana.<sup>26</sup>

The word sent by Father Taylor was confirmed. The new Bishop of Charleston was an Irishman; the new Bishop of Nor-

<sup>24</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, March 20, 1820.

<sup>25</sup> Father Taylor to Bishop Cheverus, July 8, 1820; same to Archbishop Maréchal, same date, almost identical. Father Taylor in his petition to Rome about the New York troubles has this to say about the French-Irish difficulty in America: "There is much said about the French here hating the Irish; but with my own eyes, I now see that it is not true that the French party goes against the Irish party; they simply, for very grave reasons, complain against the priests of my nation for their personal disreputable conduct. These are mostly those priests who, for grave causes, were obliged to leave their country and have associated here with the slum of the population. There are, however, many Irish priests of respectable character and they work in harmony with the Bishops, even if they are French." *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti, 1821*, p. 14, ca. July, 1819.

<sup>26</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 26, 1820.

folk, Virginia, was an Irishman, just as the new Bishop of Philadelphia was an Irishman. None had been recommended by the American hierarchy; none had set foot in this country before. Bishop Cheverus, on hearing the news, burst out with indignation:

The conduct of Propaganda is unbelievable! Our letters, and the information given them by Father Grassi, by our colleague Du Bourg, by the Bishop of Quebec, etc., by Father Taylor . . . nothing seems to have conveyed to them the slightest idea of our missions. They will soon see, but it will be too late, who are the true friends of the Holy See and of Religion. I think that the only remedy is prayer, and charity in regard to the new prelates. *I would willingly resign my see, if they will put a worthy man in my place. I would like to finish my life in your Seminary.*<sup>27</sup>

This is the first mention by Bishop Cheverus of retiring from his Diocese. Its context shows its origin. From this origin proceeded the subsequent steps that led directly to his departure from Boston.

## II

Bishop Cheverus did not then know that he himself had been suggested to Propaganda as Apostolic Visitor for New York and had been rejected because he was French. The suggestion has been summarized thus:

Cheverus would be the best, since he is near to New York: was here for consecration of the church and knows conditions: he is also very respected by all people. He is French, to be sure, but he is also father to the Irish who compose almost entirely the Boston diocese and he is known as impartial from all points, especially from the point of nationality. His zeal, prudence, piety [are] well known all over the country: he would be the best person for such a mission.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> To same, Nov. 29, 1820; cf. also same to same, Dec. 6, 1820.

<sup>28</sup> *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti, 1821, Sommario*, p. 29. Archbishop Maréchal also made a like suggestion on Dec. 23, 1819, but soon afterwards (Jan. 2, 1820) changed. Father Taylor described Bishop Cheverus as "mild in disposition, most pleasing to everyone, outstanding in prudence, and judgment, and always successful in composing disagreements" (to Cardinal Fontana, Rome, June 6, 1820, in *Guilday Transcripts*, no. 316).



The official appointed to examine the case in Rome recommended that no visitor be named, but that, if one should be sent, "it should be neither Bostoniensis nor any other French Bishop since they are of a spirit of partiality from a national point of view."<sup>29</sup>

Even before Bishop Cheverus knew this added sign of Rome's attitude to the French, he had decided, as has been stated, to resign from Boston. Besides informing his friend in Baltimore of this decision, he also wrote in a similar vein to his family in France. In early March, or late February, 1821, he received letters from home, which were taken up with his intention to return to France. His family had worked out a plan to obtain a successor for him in Boston. His letters from his family came through the hands of his old friend, M. Hyde de Neuville, who was returning to the United States as French Minister. This gentleman, when forwarding the letters to him, added one of his own. In this he evidently suggested that, as the Boston prelate was intending to return to France, he might obtain a bishopric there. When this apparently satisfactory solution was offered, the Bishop rejected it. Whatever it involved in detail, it had gone beyond his intentions. He wrote to his brother:

Boston, March 3, 1821

Finally after fifteen months of being deprived of your letters, I receive your precious packet by M. de Neuville. I, too, wrote many letters which you did not receive. The loss of my worthy friend has indeed rendered my situation here harder and sadder, and I know *that I would find a sweet retreat in your arms*: but I do not know how I could leave this establishment here. Unfortunately for both me and it, I am too necessary to it. This is so true that, although I have three priests with me, I can hardly leave it for a few days. The little Ursuline Convent belonging to the church forms still another bond, and I am obliged also to care for all the temporalities, which is a matter very disagreeable to me. . . . I wrote to M. de Neuville to thank him for his attention, but, *if I return to France*,

<sup>29</sup> Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti, 1821, pp. 7 and 8.

*I do not wish any other title there than that of the Former Bishop of Boston. . . . The noble and generous sacrifice which you wish to make will not be necessary to find me a successor. I assure you that I would like one, but that brings other difficulties.*<sup>30</sup>

A letter written within the following week to a Sulpician friend in the Seminary of Montreal affords another similar glimpse into the Bishop's troubled mind. He wrote: "They are making more bishops here than are needed. How I wish I could *un-make* one, who feels that he could gladly take refuge with you."<sup>31</sup>

In those months, therefore, Bishop Cheverus had not yet decided about the place where he would retire to, whether the Seminary in Baltimore, or that in Montreal, or his own home in France. But he apparently had made up his mind to leave Boston whenever this could be accomplished without grave injury to his flock here. And from that time onward, the heavy-hearted and fatigued Boston prelate sought to find a fit successor and to prepare him for taking over the Diocese. His choice was soon made in the person of Father Taylor.

In February of that year (1821), Father Taylor had sought employment from Bishop Cheverus, for his own bishop was dissatisfied at the priest's trip to Rome and had refused to renew his faculties when he returned to New York. Bishop Cheverus, predisposed in the priest's favor for his many good qualities, and believing that he had taken the correct side in the New York troubles, arranged with Bishop Connolly for the priest's temporary residence in Boston. Father Taylor arrived here on April 18, 1821, and soon confirmed Bishop Cheverus' good opinion of him. Three months later, on Father Lariscy's departure, he became the Bishop's first assistant.<sup>32</sup>

From the very first, the Bishop described him as a worthy clergyman. "I can only congratulate myself on [having] him.

<sup>30</sup> *Private Arch. of M. De Plinval* (copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).

<sup>31</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, March 9, 1821.

<sup>32</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, Feb. 15, 1821; Bishop Cheverus to Father Le Saulnier, March 9, 1821.

He is much esteemed and admired here. The contrast with Father Lariscy is favorable to him, and serves to bring out his amiable character and his talents.”<sup>33</sup> In September, he wrote: “I am keeping Father Taylor. He has talents, piety, and a very amiable disposition. He is pleased to be here and is esteemed and admired.”<sup>34</sup> The Bishop also found him a pleasant companion,<sup>35</sup> and by March 8, 1822, wrote to Archbishop Plessis that he had made Father Taylor his Vicar-General, and hoped that he would be his successor.<sup>36</sup> This hope he also communicated to Archbishop Maréchal on the latter’s return from Europe in November of that same year, saying:

I would like Father Taylor for my successor. In a small diocese like mine, a coadjutor would be ridiculous; but, if I could have him named, I would willingly resign and retire, either to France or to the Seminary of Baltimore, where I could pay a modest amount for board, if they would have me and treat me like a Sulpician.<sup>37</sup>

In that same November, or perhaps even in the preceding October, the Bishop wrote to friends or relatives in France that he had everything prepared to leave Boston.<sup>38</sup> At the same period he let M. Hyde de Neuville know the same thing. While, therefore, all the available evidence points to Bishop Cheverus’ poor health as playing an important part in his leaving Boston, that was not the only reason for his resolution to do so. He had come to this decision also by reason of a conviction that his rôle in the American Church was finished. He recognized that the future was for the Irish; but he wanted to be quite sure before he left that Boston would have what he thought would be the right kind of bishop. Father Taylor, whom he had trained for two years for the position, was, indeed, the kind of Irish priest who would make a good impression on non-Catholic

<sup>33</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Aug. 17, 1821.

<sup>34</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, Sept. 6, 1821.

<sup>35</sup> To Father E. Fenwick, Feb. 1, 1822 (*Georgetown Coll. Arch.*, 105 1 3).

<sup>36</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, March 8, 1822.

<sup>37</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Nov. 26, 1822.

<sup>38</sup> La Vigerie to Bishop Cheverus, June 18, 1823.

Boston. Well-educated, intelligent, a good speaker, correct enough in manner and manners, pious and looking for the better things, he was eager to unite Catholic with non-Catholic. In order to accomplish this, however, he unfortunately underrated the differences between Catholics and liberal Protestants, and held to this incorrect viewpoint with pride and tenacity.

Father Taylor was born in 1789 of a Protestant family in Castle Martin, Ireland. He attended Trinity College, Dublin, ostensibly to train himself for the ministry. He became a Catholic while there (?) and later entered the Seminary at Maynooth for the Diocese of Cloyne.<sup>39</sup> His great sympathy with Protestants was, therefore, not unnatural. While a student in the Seminary at Maynooth, he had been noted for some exaggerations along this line, as a result of which he and certain others, noted for similar ideas, were taken away by their respective bishops.<sup>40</sup> Taylor finished his studies elsewhere and was ordained, but his Bishop (Monsignor Coppinger, of Cloyne), not being entirely satisfied with him, finally gave him permission to go to America, where he was received by Bishop Connolly.<sup>41</sup>

Extremely affable and winning in manner, he soon became very popular in New York, and there likewise manifested this over-great sympathy toward Protestantism. In March, 1819, he published there a book called *The Christian's Monitor, or Practical Guide to Future Happiness; a new Roman Catholic Prayer Book*.<sup>42</sup> The first draft of this was not approved by the Archbishop of Baltimore, chiefly on the grounds of loose theology and pro-Protestant sentiment. It was "the gentlemen of the Seminary" who made this report on the book: they had examined it at the Archbishop's request. Father Taylor himself, even after he learned of their adverse criticisms, professed to see in the book nothing objectionable, except "a slight deviation (and perfectly unintentional) from certain expressions which are consecrated by antiquity." Nevertheless, he had sub-

<sup>39</sup> Rev. J. G. Shea, *History*, III, 123 and here, below.

<sup>40</sup> Dublin, May 4, 1820, *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti*, 1821, *Sommario*, p. 44.

<sup>41</sup> Dublin, May 4, 1820, *ibid*.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Parsons, *op. cit.* (629), p. 153.



mitted, with much emphasis on his own humility and some asperity against his critics.<sup>43</sup>

At that time Bishop Cheverus, who had received some of the books, wrote to the Archbishop that he agreed with the critics and that he would not put the books on sale in Boston. "The prospectus," he declared, "announced a work quite different." Nevertheless, Bishop Cheverus felt that Father Taylor was pious enough to follow the Archbishop's advice entirely on the point.<sup>44</sup> It was perhaps something of the same kind of minimalism which Father Taylor manifested later in Boston. At the St. Patrick's Day banquet of 1823, he delivered an address which, brilliant and striking though it was, occasioned some criticism. This evidently got to the Archbishop's ears, and Bishop Cheverus felt obliged to write to His Grace about it. He said:

The dear and worthy Mr. Taylor read me his discourse (I had departed when he delivered it) and nothing in it struck me as irreverent. It is not correct theologically, but when one is sure of orthodox faith and pure intention, I don't think it worth the trouble to examine a banquet speech theologically. Mr. Taylor presents you his respects, and will always be ready to disavow and retract whatever should be [found] inexact.<sup>45</sup>

Perhaps not the least of Father Taylor's recommendations in the mind of Bishop Cheverus lay in his being a friend and correspondent of Monsignor England, the new Bishop of Charleston. The Boston prelate saw in this an opportunity to aid his own general policy of forming "*cor unum et anima una*" in the episcopal body in the United States. On one occasion Father Taylor met Bishop England in New York and planned to accompany him to Boston. Bishop Cheverus wrote to the Arch-

<sup>43</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, April 10, 12, 1819. See also Bishop Cheverus to the Archbishop, May 6, 1819. See also *Notes sur le livre de M. Taylor* (Baltimore Dioc. Arch., 20 T 31).

<sup>44</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, May 6, 1819.

<sup>45</sup> Same to same, April 8, 1823. The speech in question was printed at length in the *Boston Commercial Gazette* of March 21, 1825. It was undoubtedly striking, particularly for the speaker's liberal views toward England, and his defense of the Church, as not incompatible with republican institutions, etc.

bishop, "I expect them here Friday evening. I shall try to inspire our Charleston colleague with cordiality and confidence."<sup>46</sup> On occasions Father Taylor wrote for that Bishop's newly founded newspaper, *The Miscellany*. The article on "Catholicity in New England" (July 10, 1822) probably was written or inspired by him. The Boston Bishop also presented his copy of "*Lettres édifiantes*" to Bishop England to help with the Charleston publication.<sup>47</sup>

When *The Miscellany* suspended publication at the end of 1822, Father Taylor planned to found a successor to it in Boston, under the name of *The Roman Catholic Journal and Literary Recorder*. The prospectus for it, which he got out in June, 1823, stated that it would "contain principally extracts from approved Catholic works, and tho' the good and amiable Bishop of Boston is totally unconnected with the editorial department, it will be conducted under his eye and judgment and the articles on Religion submitted to his inspection."<sup>48</sup> *The Miscellany* resumed publication shortly thereafter, and the Boston project ceased. Father Taylor continued to contribute to the revived Charleston weekly.

### III

Bishop Cheverus having prepared his successor in Boston, was able, as has been said, by November, 1822, to declare that he had everything ready to return to France. He wrote this to his influential cousin, M. de la Vigerie in Paris. He also told [wrote?] it to Baron Hyde de Neuville, when the latter was returning to France. This Minister, on his arrival in Paris, gave positive assurance of the Bishop's resolution to the Grand Almoner, a royal official who had charge of ecclesiastical affairs in the kingdom. He likewise declared that he himself answered for Bishop Cheverus' willingness to accept a French bishopric.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 26, 1821.

<sup>47</sup> *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, July 31, 1822.

<sup>48</sup> Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, June 19, 1823. One cannot help thinking about Samuel L. Knapp in this connection.

<sup>49</sup> Grand Almoner to Bishop Cheverus, July 12, 1823 (*Arch. Nat., Paris*).

Thereupon the Grand Almoner put through the plan that finally drew the Bishop from Boston. On January 12, 1823, he sent Bishop Cheverus an official notification of his nomination to the See of Montauban in Southern France. The Boston Bishop received this official advice in Boston on April 5th. Some two weeks previously, however, on March 23rd, to be exact, he had learned from private letters sent by M. de la Vigerie, that the nomination had been published. That year March 23rd was Palm Sunday. On Wednesday, March 26th, the news appeared in the Boston papers, which were undoubtedly informed by the Bishop himself. A long comment carried by the *Columbian Centinel*, ended with the words:

We cannot . . . abstain from expressing a hope that our community will not sustain the irreparable loss of his departure, and that he will hesitate before he accedes to the wishes of his Most Christian Majesty.

When Louis the 14th wished to conciliate his protestant subjects, at Poitou, he sent amongst them the immortal author of *Telemachus*, and his present successor could not make a more judicious selection than he has done in the person of Bishop Cheverus, who possesses the spirit of Fenelon, to secure the affections of the colonists [colignists?] of Montauban. Bishop Cheverus is peculiarly calculated to extract the sting from prejudice by his mild and persuasive spirit, his charitable disposition, and his extensive attainments.<sup>50</sup>

That same day the Bishop wrote the news to Archbishop Maréchal, declaring that it had

surprised and afflicted [him]. . . . I am ill as a result of it. I desire to avoid this translation, if it is possible. My plan *was*, if I ever did return to France, to finish my days there in retreat in the midst of my family. . . . If I am *compelled* to leave Boston, I wish Father Taylor to be my successor. I hope that they will not nominate a Bishop [here] without consulting me: if they do, everything will go badly here, and the new prelate will have much trouble. I desire that Rome refuse to translate me to Montauban. Give me the help of your prayers and your

<sup>50</sup> *Columbian Centinel*, Boston, March 26, 1823; cf. an abbreviated form in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, same date.

advice. My poor head is topsy turvy. . . . This morning's papers express the hope that I will not abandon Boston. . . .<sup>51</sup>

The official notification arrived on Saturday, April 5th. The Grand Almoner's letter to the Bishop began by stating:

Baron Hyde de Neuville, on his return from the United States, spoke to me with the liveliest interest about your situation. He gave me to understand that the climate of that country, so little favorable to your health, might be a motive sufficient to decide you to accept a new office in France.

In accordance with this flattering hope, Monseigneur, I proposed to His Majesty to nominate you to the bishopric of Montauban, whose reëstablishment and boundaries were definitively settled by His Holiness' bull of October 10th last. The King, by an order of the 13th of this month, has called you to occupy this see. . . .

The Grand Almoner then urged the Bishop's speedy return to France, and said that it would be easy for the latter to provide for Boston by delegating his jurisdiction. He then went on,

It will be at Paris that your Brief will be handed to you, that you will put your resignation into the hands of the [representative of the] Sovereign Pontiff, and that the Nuncio of His Holiness will undertake the canonical requirements for obtaining your new bulls.<sup>52</sup>

This letter was accompanied by one from the Baron de Neuville, dated Paris, January 24, 1823, in which this friendly official strove to refute what he evidently considered the Bishop's objections. Appealing to the Boston prelate's patriotism, and answering the question about health and strength, he also touched two very important points.

. . . Accept, I conjure you! Even if to do so means an act of submission, make it for *our* King, *our* Church and *our* Common Good. . . . I am authorized [he wrote] to tell you that the Court of Rome will be disposed to give you at Boston the suc-

<sup>51</sup> March 26, 1823 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 L 53).

<sup>52</sup> *Paris, Arch. Nat., Aff. Etrang.* (copy).



cessor whom you will designate, the one that you believe best fitted to preserve the vineyard that is so dear to you.<sup>53</sup>

The Boston prelate was thus faced with a situation which he had not planned on. It involved not only departure from Boston, which had long been in his mind, but also an exchange of sees, which he had not planned on, which he was indeed opposed to, and which he had already rejected. From the almost bewildering multiplicity of evidence that is now available on the succeeding events, the fact clearly appears that Bishop Cheverus did not want Montauban or any other French diocese. It also appears that he did intend to resign from Boston. Likewise, it is certain that he eagerly desired to visit home and family, even if only for a visit. Finally, it is certain that he wished and worked for the election of Father Taylor as his successor here.

On Tuesday, the 8th of April, when the Bishop sent to Archbishop Maréchal the copies of the two letters so recently received, he accompanied them with the words:

I received these letters Saturday. I desire to refuse, but can I do so without going myself and personally petitioning the King? Tell me what answer to make. God preserve me from giving a bad example to my colleagues! I am ill and restless. I would take your representations, those of Boston, etc. They would let me return, I think. Show these letters only to the venerable Father Tessier and other trustworthy persons. . . .<sup>54</sup>

On Monday morning, April 21st, Bishop Cheverus received the answer from Archbishop Maréchal (dated April 16?). This repeated the previous wish that the Boston prelate should not accept the new appointment, but it was now supported by the Archbishop's considered conviction, and the opinions of two other outstanding ecclesiastics, whose advice he had sought (Father Tessier, of the Seminary, and Father Whitfield, the Baltimore Vicar-General). After reading this letter, Bishop Cheverus opened the door of his little room, which looked out on the sanctuary, and threw himself on his knees.

<sup>53</sup> *Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal (copy).

<sup>54</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 L 54.

An hour later, he rose up and wrote to the Archbishop: "*Je reste ici.*"<sup>55</sup>

What he had decided on was not to accept Montauban and not to leave Boston for the present. It was the Archbishop's letter that occasioned this decision. The word of his ecclesiastical superior had been to him, as he later declared, "like the voice of God, and he had conformed [himself] to it, tho' at great cost."<sup>56</sup>

On the very next day, even before the Bishop made public announcement of his resolution, many prominent non-Catholics of Boston drew up a memorial addressed to the Grand Almoner of France and having as purpose the prevention of Bishop Cheverus' transfer from Boston. They based their request on the Bishop's social usefulness in New England.

The Catholics of this place and of the New England States [they declared] are generally a description of persons who need not only instructions as to their great duties as Christians, but also advice, consolations, encouragement or correction in their temporal concerns.

To accomplish objects so important to them, and so necessary to the good order of society, the most commanding confidence is indispensable in their ecclesiastical rulers.

It is impossible for us to make known to you by any words how entire, grateful and beneficent is the dominion of Bishop Cheverus over all to whom he ministers in his Apostolic Authority. We hold him to be a blessing and a treasure in our social community which we cannot part with and which, with-

<sup>55</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 L 56.

<sup>56</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, May 7, 1823 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice*, Montreal); cf. also *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, XII (1901); 358.

*Note:* The Archbishop's letter had left Bishop Cheverus some choice: for it recognized that he might really feel obliged to go to France, partly for his health's sake, at least. One paragraph of Msgr. Maréchal's letter apparently indicates that all Maréchal asked was that Cheverus would not accept *immediately*. It read: "Once you are in France, if your health is still feeble, then after consulting God and some enlightened persons, you could accept the post which is offered to you. . . . Then it would be necessary to obtain your successor from the Holy See. . . . If you ask the Holy Father for Mr. Taylor at once, you will obtain him." (Cited in letter of Cheverus to Cardinal Somaglia, Jan. 13, 1824, in *Sommario for Filling the See of Boston*, 1825.)

out injustice to any man we may affirm, if withdrawn from us can never be replaced. . . .

This may well be considered a unique document: an appeal by prominent Protestants addressed to a Catholic authority, with the purpose of preventing the removal of a Catholic prelate from their community; and that community was Boston! Among the 226 signers, Federal, State, and Municipal officials were represented, as well as lawyers, physicians, merchants, bankers, school teachers, and even some Protestant clergymen.<sup>57</sup> It was an imposing list, including nearly all the notable Protestants in Boston. In one group were to be found John W. Davis, District Clerk of the United States; William Gray, President of the Boston Branch of the Bank of the United States; Benjamin Russell, editor of the *Columbian Centinel*; Harrison Gray Otis, member of the Governor's Council; Thomas Dawes, Judge of Probate; Josiah Quincy, Mayor of Boston; the Hon. William Tudor; Thomas L. Winthrop, President of the Union Bank; Benjamin Pollard, City Marshal; Francis J. Oliver, President of the American Insurance Company; Elbridge Gerry, Surveyor of Customs; H. A. S. Dearborn, Collector of Customs; Nathaniel Tracy, Deputy Collector; Isaac Parker, Judge; Charles Jackson, Judge; Peter Thacher, Judge; Daniel Webster, Counsellor; Daniel Sargent, President of the Boston Marine Insurance Company; James Hall, President of the New England Marine Insurance Company; Gardiner Greene, President of the Suffolk Bank.

Among the merchants were, John Phillips, Robert G. Shaw, Perrin May, Benjamin West, John Bellows, Samuel Dorr, Daniel Parker, Caleb Loring, Paschal Pope, Amos and Abbott Lawrence, Joshua Clapp, John H. Dexter, Jacob Stearns, Phineas Foster, Bryant Tilden, Samuel May, Samuel Parkman, Samuel Perkins, Thomas H. Perkins, Jonathan Amory, Stephen Higginson, Theodore Lyman and John Lowell, Jr.

By April 30th, Bishop Cheverus could write to the Grand Almoner a definite refusal of the offer of Montauban and a determination not to leave Boston at that time. He enclosed

<sup>57</sup> The list of the signers in the original in *Arch. Nat., Paris*.

the divers letters which supported his decision, and ended his own letter with the words:

If His Majesty only permit me (as I now beg him to do) to stay here a *little longer!* . . . Would I dare hope to preserve your favor: would His Majesty pardon me for doing what I believe before God is my duty; would he deign to believe that I am and have never ceased to be devoted to him! If I had the assurance of these things, I would be happy. . . .<sup>58</sup>

On May 3rd, the French Consul sailed with these letters. That crisis, with all its cost, seemed over. How long a time must now elapse before the Bishop could really leave Boston, he did not know. But letters from his family, arriving within the week, again renewed his anguish. His family was still expecting him with such joy and impatience!<sup>59</sup> He told them that he could not have accepted: every well-informed person here told him to stay: it was in his mind now to try to go to France the next spring for a visit and then return to America.<sup>60</sup>

The Consul himself, who carried to France the Bishop's refusal, understood the situation exactly, and was able, when he arrived in Paris, to take much of the sting out of the dispatches. If the proper pressure could be brought to bear on the Bishop! And he felt that he knew what it was. So things were started moving to undo the Bishop's resolution. Conversations of the Consul with the Foreign Minister, and with M. de la Vigerie, the Bishop's cousin, and conversations of the latter with the Grand Almoner's Secretary, and probably with the Grand Almoner himself, soon resulted in a peremptory demand, sent to the Boston prelate in the name of the King, that he return to France at once. This was dispatched from Paris on July 12th.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> *Arch. Nat., Paris* (copy in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 14 L 55); cf. also letter to Hyde de Neuville, cited in Hamon-Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 138, from an unknown source. He had also consulted the Sulpicians at Montreal and the Archbishop of Quebec.

<sup>59</sup> To Father Le Saulnier, May 7, 1823 (*Bibliothèque St. Sulpice, Montreal*).

<sup>60</sup> To his brother, July 29, 1823 (*Private Arch. of M. de Plinval*).

<sup>61</sup> Documents in *Arch. Nat., Paris*: Ministre des Aff. Etrang. to Grand Aumonier, June 18, 1823; La Vigerie to Secretary of Grand Aumonier, June 18, 1823; Grand Aumonier to Bishop Cheverus, July 12, 1823; La Vigerie to Bishop Cheverus, July 12, 1823; Grand Aumonier to Ministre des Aff. Etrang., July 12, 1823. See also Bishop Cheverus' letter to his brother, July 29, 1823, in *parish arch. of N. Dame de Mayenne* (copy in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*).



The Grand Almoner reminded Bishop Cheverus of the determination which "you had previously arrived at, for grave reasons, to return soon to Europe and be near your family." Then he said that the regrets of American ecclesiastics and of the "notables of Boston" had apparently made enough impression "on you to make you hesitate about it." The regrets of the ecclesiastics, he noted, had been foreseen and discounted in advance. The citizens of Boston, he asserted, "look more to public order, which you help to maintain by your virtues, than to the prosperity of the Catholic Church, in which they have no interest." The Grand Almoner went on to explain that the Church in France stood in great need of good churchmen and then he added:

It was in view of this that I regarded as a sign from Divine Providence the positive assurance of your determination to return to France. . . . You can judge, Monseigneur, the affliction which your letter caused me, and how deep it would have been, *if I did not have the hope that you would not persist in the reasons which detained you.* I am informed that those reasons which had *previously* prevailed to determine you to return to France are still the same, and you will find even more potent reasons in your sentiments of devotion to your fatherland. . . . The assurance of the will of the King . . . will confirm . . . I doubt not, all the other reasons. . . .

The Grand Almoner's letter was received by Bishop Cheverus in Boston on August 30th. That very same day it was answered by the Bishop: "I shall leave [here] about October 1st to put myself at your disposal." He signed himself "John, Bishop of Boston, named Bishop of Montauban."<sup>62</sup>

Bishop Cheverus then declared to the Archbishop: "I must go. . . . If I can obtain their permission to return, I shall be here in the spring."<sup>63</sup>

Despite these words Bishop Cheverus realized that there was hardly any hope of his returning to Boston,<sup>64</sup> and he made his

<sup>62</sup> To Grand Aumonier, Aug. 30, 1823 (*Arch. Nat., Paris*).

<sup>63</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 3, 1823.

<sup>64</sup> To Cardinal Somaglia, Jan. 13, 1824, in *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti, 1825, Sommario*, no. III.

preparations for leaving with the idea that he would not return. He told the Archbishop that, if he had to have a successor, it was Father Taylor whom he still wished for. The Bishop made a new will and disposed of all his property as he would have done if he were dying. He left the diocesan trusts to his successor. What few temporal goods he had he donated to the Ursulines and to his clergy. He gave away his books too, some to his successor, and others to the Boston Athenaeum.<sup>65</sup> He said Good-bye to Boston without debts or possessions.<sup>66</sup>

Among the notable incidents which marked his departure from Boston was the generous offer made to him by a certain John McNamara. Besides all this man's previous acts of kindness and devotedness to the Bishop, his last act was of the noblest kind. He was a grocer, who "by many years of frugality and industry had amassed about twelve hundred dollars," and at the moment of the Bishop's leaving, he offered him "a portion of his property, one thousand dollars, for his own private comfort, and offered it with such sincere and amiable earnestness that, had I wanted it," the Bishop wrote him, "I would have accepted it. All this is engraved on my memory in indelible characters."<sup>67</sup>

On September 16th, the Catholic congregation presented him with a farewell address.

Your departure [they said] is to us a most afflicting dispensation of Providence; and the event has inflicted a wound, whose anguish time may assuage, but can never heal.

As a religious community, we were connected and consolidated under your auspices; and by your watchings and your prayers we have enjoyed the smiles of an indulgent Heaven;

<sup>65</sup> Lyman to Bishop Cheverus, Sept. 15, 1823; Bishop Cheverus to Lyman, Sept. 25, 1823 (*Athenaeum Arch.*). The latter cited in *Bostonian Soc. Pub.*, II (1905), 47-48.

<sup>66</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Cardinal Somaglia, Jan. 13, 1824, in *Arch. Prop. Fid., Atti, 1825, Sommario*, no. III; Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 18 (28), 1823. He appointed Father Taylor co-executor with Archbishop Maréchal.

<sup>67</sup> Bishop Cheverus to John McNamara, July 26, 1824 (original in *Boston Dioc. Arch.*). For the story, see Hamon-Stewart, *Life of Cardinal Cheverus*, pp. 140 and 388.

but at this solemn moment of parting, *probably forever*, the memory of the dead crowds upon us, in the loved form of him, who gathered us as a flock, and who with you walked hand in hand, laboring for our good; but this kind pastor to us, this coadjutor and friend to you, the ever lamented Matignon, has passed to a better world, to receive the reward of the faithful and the just. The living and the dead together possess our hearts.

The Bishop's reply was short and simple. His departure was "a necessity; it behooves you and myself to submit." He had expected that his mortal remains might be deposited with Father Matignon's and "never," he said, "can you honor or gratify me more than by uniting our names in your blessing and remembrance."<sup>68</sup>

The *Boston Commercial Gazette* (September 22nd) undoubtedly set forth the regret of the general non-Catholic public. "The amenity of his manners as a gentleman, his accomplishments as a scholar, his tolerant disposition as a religious teacher, and his pure and apostolic life, have been our theme of praise ever since we have known him."

Samuel Knapp, who was an eye-witness to the sorrowful departure of the 26th of September, described it in his own lavish fashion: the people's tears, the Bishop's firmness to support himself in bidding them farewell. A large company attended him on his way, certainly as far as Walpole. Next day, the *Columbian Centinel* remarked editorially, "Without hesitancy we say that the labors of no individual have produced more good than his. The best wishes of our community go with him."

He sailed from New York on October 1st, and, after an apparently miraculous escape from shipwreck, landed in France on November 1st.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Boston Monthly Magazine*, I (1825), 14, 15, 16.

<sup>69</sup> For stories of the voyage and its near tragic ending see Hamon-Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 148 ff.; report of the ship's captain in *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, II (1822), 41 ff.; Father Moranvilliers (in *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*, 22 B J 7 and 19 K 10).

## IV

Arriving in Paris on November 13th, he presented himself to the Grand Almoner, "who, together with others of the King's Council, would not listen to [his] expressed desire to return to Boston."<sup>70</sup> Their attitude was taken by Bishop Cheverus to represent the express order of the King, and he yielded. So he stayed in France. There were some delays in his transfer to Montauban; the Papal Nuncio wished him to return to Boston; the Holy Father himself, acting on an appeal from Archbishop Maréchal, also desired it, but not to the extent of displeasing the King of France. The ecclesiastical objections were removed on February 14, 1824, and the bulls for Montauban were issued shortly thereafter.

Already on November 22, 1823, Bishop Cheverus having indicated to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda his willingness to accept Montauban, expressed to him his desire for Father Taylor as his successor in Boston. Again, on December 29th, he expressed the same desire. Undoubtedly his letter dealt in part with the following incident, which had happened in Boston and which he had just learned about.

On November 4, 1823, at the opening of the Supreme Court in Boston, W. Taylor, pastor of the Catholic Church, was requested to offer up the customary prayer. The invitation was as grateful to him as it was unexpected. His performance was characterized by a fervency of devotion, which was felt and admired by those who heard it. It was also marked by a sublime originality of thought, clad in language strikingly eloquent. . . . After the religious service, he remarked on the singular fact that a priest who held his ordination from the Pope, should be invited to pray for a protestant court, and that, too, on the anniversary of the eve of the Gunpowder Plot. . . .<sup>71</sup>

With this incident in mind, Bishop Cheverus wrote to the Nuncio on December 29th, again recommending Father Taylor as

<sup>70</sup> To Cardinal Somaglia, Paris, Nov. 22, 1823; in *Atti* for Boston of March, 1825, *Sommario*, I.

<sup>71</sup> From *Boston Galaxy*, cited in the *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, Nov. 17, 1823.



his successor in Boston. "If unfortunately, anyone else than he should be appointed, no matter what his merits, I tremble for the Church of Boston. A stranger would not succeed there. No one can do anything in a city like Boston, unless he has the support of public opinion." <sup>72</sup>

## V

Meanwhile, in Boston Father Taylor was following with anxiety the outcome of Bishop Cheverus' stay in Europe. Of course, as he well knew, that outcome was intimately tied up with his own future. He could hardly help knowing, when the Bishop left Boston, that there was little, if any, hope of his return and that the Bishop had desired him for his successor. It is with a strange sense of the unreal, therefore, that one reads Father Taylor's first letters to the Archbishop and to Monseigneur Plessis of Quebec.<sup>73</sup> They were affected and hollow. His letter of October 20, 1824, however, sounded quite a different note. He had heard from Bishop Cheverus that the prospect for his election to Boston did not look so favorable. "As you had foreseen," the Bishop wrote on August 25th, "the [Dominicans] at Rome are opposed to your nomination, and recommendations for other persons have been received from America." Father Taylor told this to the Archbishop, and then went on to say:

I stated to Bishop Cheverus the opposition he would have to encounter, and circumstances prove that I did not utter a vague prediction. . . . In attempting to do me an injury, [these opponents] will very probably render me a substantial favour and, in the plenitude of candor and filial love, I assure your Grace I [should be?] the last person in the world to regret the success of their efforts in defeating my elevation to such a formidable and awfully responsible situation. If I had any human pride to [satisfy?], my ambition would indeed be

<sup>72</sup> *Arch. Secret. Vat., Sec. di Stato*, Rub. 248, no. 30858.

<sup>73</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Feb. 12, March 23, June 19, 1824 (*Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*); to Archbishop Plessis, June 9, 19.

silenced when such a prelate as Bishop Cheverus would designate me as his successor. . . . Begging your blessing, and expressing a hope that I will meet your Grace in that blessed country where the bud will not fear the canker worm and where the leaf is sheltered from the blast . . . I remain, etc.<sup>74</sup>

For some time, interested as he was in the outcome of Bishop Cheverus' recommendation of himself as successor, "[he] had taken no serious measures for the government of the Church here; [his] efforts were principally directed to preserve matters *in statu quo*." <sup>75</sup> But a situation arose which compelled him to take some decisive steps. Before Bishop Cheverus' departure from Boston, it will be recalled, the Baptist "Society for the Benefit of the Penobscot Indians" had started a school at Old Town. They had to discontinue it, after only a few weeks, because of the sickness of the instructor. In June, 1824, however, they engaged a new instructor, one Pindar Field, and reopened the school which, in August, they reported to be in successful operation. Some fifteen to twenty-five children were said to be then attending the school.<sup>76</sup>

When Father Taylor heard of this renewed Baptist attempt, he immediately sent Father Byrne to Old Town "to counteract the exertions of the fanaticks and to report . . . on the conduct of the tribes," and he wrote to Archbishop Maréchal to obtain another priest.<sup>77</sup> Unable to obtain his request from Baltimore, Father Taylor then wrote to Archbishop Plessis, asking for the Rev. Father Holmes, who was a native of the New England States and at that time a priest at Berthier, in Lower Canada. Father Taylor said, "I don't allude to right or to even courtesy. I throw myself on your generosity. . . ." <sup>78</sup> He wrote in this fashion, because Bishop Cheverus had already freed Father Holmes from any obligations to this Diocese.<sup>79</sup> There was

<sup>74</sup> *Baltimore Dioc. Arch.*

<sup>75</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, Nov. 19, 1824.

<sup>76</sup> Summary of the Bangor letter of Aug. 10, 1824, in *New Hampshire Repository* for Aug. 23, 1824.

<sup>77</sup> Aug. 27, 1824.

<sup>78</sup> To Archbishop Plessis, Nov. 19, 1824.

<sup>79</sup> Bishop Cheverus to Archbishop Plessis, June 19, 1823.

some hope that Father Holmes might return here in September, but he did not.<sup>80</sup>

The Baptists, on their side, continued the work of Indian proselytism.<sup>81</sup> And for the same reason the Administrator found himself obliged to send Father Byrne to the Indians again in 1825. He wrote the Archbishop on May 20, 1825, again seeking a priest:

. . . Would Your Grace recommend an application to Georgetown College or could I obtain a pious and efficient clergyman from the Society even for three months? <sup>82</sup>

He was unsuccessful in this also. At that time it was still Father Taylor's hope to stay in Boston, and he wished "to associate with [himself] one or two pious and well-informed clergymen," who would share his labors.<sup>83</sup> He desired "an Irishman by birth, but possessing the regularity of deportment and correctness of habit so characteristic of the French priests. . . ." <sup>84</sup>

During the year 1824, Father Taylor had carried on a correspondence with a certain Henry B. C. Greene, a young doctor in Saco, Maine, about the claims of the Catholic Church. The seventeen letters exchanged on both sides form as pleasing a collection on this subject as could be desired, and show Father Taylor in his very best colors. Simple, straightforward, sympathetic, convincing, they give one a view of that side of the man which undoubtedly had so powerfully attracted Bishop Cheverus to him. They also serve to introduce Dr. Greene, who made his profession of the Catholic Faith to Father Taylor in the Cathedral in November, 1824, and who, some dozen years later, removed to Boston with his family and was a splendid example and strong support of Catholics here for many years.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Father Fenwick to Archbishop Plessis, Dec. 12, 1825.

<sup>81</sup> Letter of Pindar Field, of Nov. 22, 1824, from the *Portland Mirror*, appealing for funds to build a school (cited in *New Hampshire Repository*, Dec. 20, 1824).

<sup>82</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, May 20, 1825.

<sup>83</sup> To Dr. Greene, of Saco, April 20, 1825 (printed in *U.S. Cath. Hist. Mag.*, III [1890], 369 ff.).

<sup>84</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, June 20, 1825.

<sup>85</sup> The correspondence in question was published in the *U.S. Cath. Hist. Mag.*, III (1890), 369 ff.

By the end of March, Rome had decided against Father Taylor. It had indeed received favorable replies about him from some besides Bishop Cheverus, particularly Bishop England, of Charleston, and Father Kohlmann, as well as finally the Archbishop; but the other bishops of the country did not recommend him. In face of all this, and particularly of Bishop Du Bourg's determined and eulogistic recommendation of Father Benedict Fenwick (who, indeed, was named first or second by all who made recommendations), Rome could no longer think of Father Taylor for Boston. In late March, 1825, the Congregation's choice of Father Fenwick ended that matter.

Father Taylor received the news in the early days of September, 1825. The first word came from Father Fenwick himself, the next from Archbishop Maréchal. For Father Taylor it was the end of the chapter. He wrote to the Archbishop:

As for myself, Monseigneur, I never ambitioned this responsible dignity, and I thank the divine goodness that my shoulders (too feeble indeed for such a burden) are not charged with it. As soon as I shall have arranged the temporal affairs of the church with the amiable Father Fenwick, and handed over my charge to his Highness, I propose to go over to *your* beautiful country, Monseigneur, and there end my days. Brought up in the principles of the Gallican Church, I have always had an attachment for it. My knowledge of French literature will, I hope, render me useful in the ministry. Although I am no "Ramsay," I desire that my ashes may repose near the "Fenelon" who was my father and my friend. I shall embark for Havre in the steamboat, in December.<sup>86</sup>

On September 17th, Father Taylor announced the news to the Boston congregation, spoke in high terms of his successor, and declared his own intention to leave America. On the next day, the *Boston Gazette* carried the news, with the added comment that Father Taylor was

a gentleman whose manners are affectionate and polished — a scholar of the most profound and extensive acquirements in

<sup>86</sup> To Archbishop Maréchal, Sept. 12, 1825. He had already been promised by Bishop Cheverus in Montauban "any appointment in my power to bestow" (Father Taylor to Archbishop Maréchal, May 20, 1825).



letters and science, and a minister of religion of unsullied purity and untired zeal. The throbs of a thousand hearts bear witness to the hold he has on society, and the high estimation of his worth. To him, this appointment of another, with his prospects, must be a subject of pleasure rather than regret, for the cares and duties of such a place are incalculable. His only pang will be in separating from the numerous warm attachments he has formed in this diocese.<sup>87</sup>

Father Taylor did, in fact, what he then declared. He left the Diocese and he left America; but this last was only after preaching a sermon at Baltimore which plainly showed his bitter disappointment and deep resentment.

By reason of the copious citations in the previous text, there is little reason here to sum up the traits of Bishop Cheverus' character. Zeal, learning, humility, prudence, charity, religion, affection were fused by a deep all-pervading faith into a personality such as seldom graces the pages of history. There was in it all a peculiar delicacy of perception, a graciousness of manner, and sincerity of eager affection that brought a universal admiration. And there was withal an irresistible simplicity and straightforwardness.<sup>88</sup>

All this he brought back with him to his beloved France, and there, as here, it quickly showed its power. From Bishop of Montauban, he became (1826) Archbishop of Bordeaux, and

<sup>87</sup> *Boston Gazette*, cited in *U.S. Cath. Miscellany*, V (1825), 207.

On March 6, 1827, he applied to Lord Bathurst for a recommendation to the bishopric of Halifax, Nova Scotia. In the course of his letter, he wrote: "I am a British subject and entertained [*sic*] for the government and constitution of my country a loyal attachment and profound veneration, which have been much strengthened and confirmed by reading, travelling, and experience. I resided for ten years in the United States. . . . I, at all times and occasions, fearlessly and intrepidly avowed my attachment to my King and country, and never conformed to legal qualifications and was never consequently admitted a Citizen of that Country" (*P.R.O., London*, C. O. 217, vol. 147; transcript in *Pub. Arch. Can.* Kindness of J. F. Kenney). Father Taylor died in Paris, Aug. 1, 1829, at the age of thirty-nine. He had gone to Paris with Archbishop Cheverus and was stricken suddenly. Archbishop Cheverus to Bonneuil, *Am. Cath. Hist. Soc. Records*, XV (1904), 486. Cf. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 21, 1828.

<sup>88</sup> R. H. Lord, "Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus, First Catholic Bishop of Boston," in *Proceedings, Mass. Hist. Soc.*, LXV (1933), 64-78.

(1836) Cardinal. At his death, July 19, 1836, the world that knew him and had known him, mourned the loss of a friend in Christ.

In Boston, Protestant and Catholic harked back to the thirty-years span, covered here by him and his beloved teacher and friend. If Boston thought of the few years before their coming, it did so now, with an understanding that wiped out their sting. The generation of Matignon and Cheverus had more than abundantly compensated for the sad beginnings of our very first years. That generation had truly witnessed "a revolution in the order of grace." It had seen the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

END OF VOLUME I



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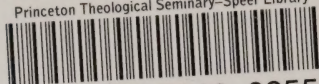






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